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Huge U-turn over the kids

And how Kate got HER way!

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'Andrew is
a walking
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EXCLUSIVE

MEGHAN'S RETURN 'I'LL PROVE THEM WRONG'

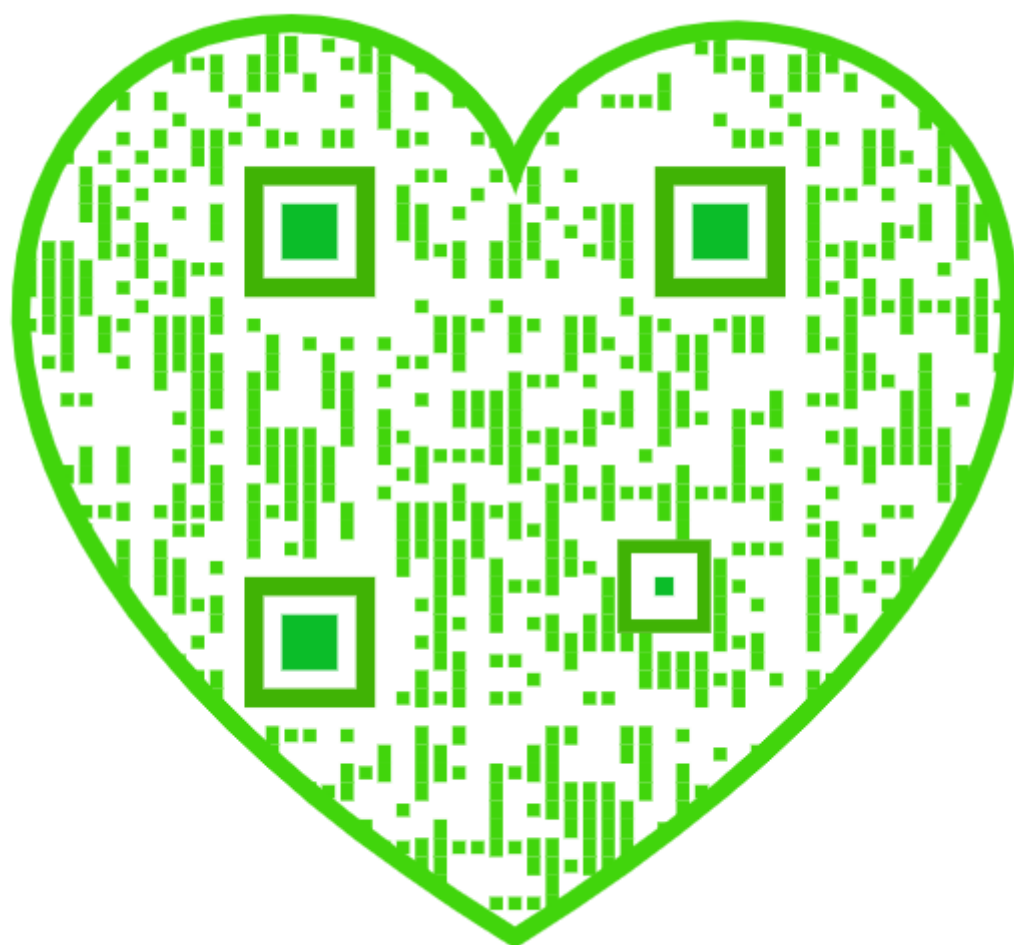
How her surprise comeback has rocked the royals

Affairs, divorce & heartbreak



31
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Love dramas of the royal family



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editor's letter



Love is in the air

We're only a few weeks into 2025, but it has already been a tumultuous start for the royal family. Meghan Markle marked her return to the spotlight with a shiny new Instagram account and the announcement of a new Netflix series, then delayed her comeback out of respect for her and Prince Harry's neighbours devastated by the wildfires in California. As we wait for the show to start next month, the royal family are taking stock of what might be coming next – including rumours of a new book. Read all about it on page 6.

We reveal how Princess Kate and Prince William have finally resolved an ongoing dispute over their children's schooling, and what this will mean for George, Charlotte

and Louis over the coming years. Read the full story on page 10. And while February might be the month for love and romance, it's not always plain sailing for this family. We've got a 31-page magazine on the love dramas of the royals – an interesting read!

If you're hoping for a calmer, more romantic month, we have lots to inspire you from page 50, including regal date-night fashion and beauty looks from on the high street. We've got stunning floral homewares, a travel feature on romantic retreats, and delicious brunch recipes inspired by our king!

We hope you enjoy.

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4
*Regal romance
style*

6
*Meghan 'wants
2025 to be her
big year'*

10
*Kate's big win
over children's
future*

14
*'Andrew is a
disaster'*

19
*31-page royal
love drama
special*

50
*Date night
dresses*

54
*Romantic
beauty buys*

56
*Elegant floral
interiors*

58
*Nurturing
friendships*

60
*Comfort
puddings*

62
*Brunch like a
king*

64
Dreamy escapes

66
Royal smooches



Regal Rom



Queen Letizia of Spain

Style icon Queen Letizia of Spain, 52, opted for a bold and radiant fuchsia tweed dress while attending an awards ceremony.



Queen Mary of Denmark

Denmark's Queen Mary, 52, was poised to perfection in a tailored red gown. The cinched-in waist created a gorgeous silhouette.



Queen Camilla

Our Queen Camilla, 77, demonstrated the perfect mix of sweet yet stylish in a blush hue dress, finished with a hat and Lady Dior bag.



ance

*Cupid's got
nothing on these
royal ladies*



*Catherine,
Princess
of Wales*

Mastering Valentine's dressing was Princess Kate, 42, in a red cape dress adorned with a large bow and Miu Miu clutch.



*Zara
Tindall*

The equestrian, 41, was a royal Barbie in a pink silk dress by Jane Atelier. Her full look came to a whopping £2,200.



*Charlene,
Princess
of Monaco*

If there was a winning winter ensemble it would be this sublime scarlet look from Monaco's Princess Charlene, 46.



*Princess
Beatrice*

Looking delightful in berry red was Princess Beatrice, 36, in a Beulah London dress as she braved the rain.



Meghan's return: 'She wants 2025 to be her biggest yet'

Her new TV show is causing problems for the royals – and could lead to further trouble...

January was set to be a momentous month for Meghan Markle, who kickstarted the year with the announcement of her new Netflix series, *With Love, Meghan*. The show was supposed to launch a few days later, but had to be postponed until March because of the wildfires in LA. As we await its premiere, we're told her surprise comeback has rocked the royals – leaving them concerned about what else may be ahead in 2025.

'Meghan has public interest'

Having previously quit social media in 2018, Meghan, 43, made her surprise Instagram return last month. Amassing millions of followers within days, she then revealed that *With Love, Meghan* – the newest instalment in the Sussexes' million-dollar Netflix deal – was set to air days later. However, as the Los Angeles devastation continued to spread, Meghan's show – described as 'a heartfelt tribute to the beauty of Southern California' – was delayed. Instead, she and

Prince Harry, 40, who live in nearby Montecito, visited communities left in ruins, giving out food and meeting with residents and emergency workers.

The lifestyle series – set in a luxurious Californian farmhouse – sees Meghan 'blending practical how-tos and candid conversations with friends, new and old'. In the trailer, she is seen looking carefree as she shows off her domestic skills, chopping vegetables, slicing a cake and arranging flowers – all while explaining, 'We're not in the pursuit of perfection; we're in the pursuit of joy. Love is in the details.'



Joined by famous pal, Mindy Kaling



Meghan and Harry now live in California



Meghan's new Netflix show has been postponed until March



Chef Roy Choi joins Meghan in the kitchen

A mixed reaction

Despite the unfortunate timing, we hear those close to Meghan are still confident the series will be a success when it eventually airs.

Our source says, 'Meghan was told by all of her friends who have seen the show that she's got a hit on her hands.' But with rumours that a memoir and possibly even a magazine could follow, the royal family are understandably nervous...

When the series was announced, the reaction was mixed. Some fans took to social media to share their excitement, with one writing, 'If her recipes are actually good, I'm all in.' Branding the show a 'wholesome escape', another added, 'I'm loving the vibe.'

However, not everyone was impressed with the Martha Stewart-esque concept. Some were left disappointed upon learning

that *With Love, Meghan* was not filmed in the Duke, 40, and Duchess of Sussex's family home but in a sprawling £6.5 million farmhouse just a few miles from their actual Montecito residence.

Others criticised the show for focusing on the Duchess herself. Meghan and Harry have often mentioned their desire for 'boundaries' and 'privacy' – something many feel this comeback is at odds with. 'For wanting privacy, they do seem desperate for attention,' one wrote. Another agreed, 'Privacy isn't

that important when their popularity falters.'

Whichever camp you're in, there's no doubt that *With Love, Meghan* will firmly place the Duchess of Sussex back in the spotlight. And while a Netflix success is good news for Meghan, the source notes that it could be a sign of trouble for the royals.

They reveal, 'If the show does well, people are predicting that it will no doubt be a disaster for the royal family. It will go a long way to prove that Meghan's the one that's got the public interest –



Reuniting in 2022 for Queen Elizabeth's funeral



Harry and Meghan with Archie in 2019

which will mean even more opportunities for her to be front and centre.'

Launching brands

The world of lifestyle isn't an unexpected path for former *Suits* star Meghan. Before marrying into royalty, the actress ran a successful blog called The Tig – named after her favourite red wine, Tignanello.

Launched in 2014, The Tig gave insight into Meghan's daily life, including fashion, travel and interviews with the likes of Ivanka Trump and Elizabeth Hurley.

In one post, the star reflected on her New Year's Resolutions, joking, 'The marathon still hasn't happened. The swearing comes in lulls, triggered by being

overworked or feeling mighty cheeky after a couple drinks.'

The blog was thought to be a healthy side income for the star – with some experts predicting that in 2016, at the height of its success, The Tig had enough viewers to garner a yearly revenue of around £65k.

However, Meghan shut down the platform in 2017, months after it emerged she was dating Prince Harry. Some have described it as one of Meghan's 'many sacrifices' when preparing for royal life. Others have

stressed that her relationship was not at fault, but rather that The Tig was 'a full time job' in itself.

Meghan's love for The Tig is why many were unsurprised when she launched her brand, American Riviera Orchard, last year. Although not quite a return to blogging, the California-based lifestyle brand sells home décor

'She is in demand'



Kate and Meghan were said to have 'clashed'



Harry was only briefly involved in Meghan's new show

and kitchen items, as well as various jams and jellies – lending itself nicely to the world of *With Love, Meghan*. However, its opening appears to have been stalled, with no products yet available at the time of going to press. With her star power on the

rise once more, our source says that the duchess is in demand for even more projects – including a 'tell-all memoir'.

We hear, 'There's no confirmation that Meghan is going to release a memoir this year, but it's no secret that she's being



On their wedding day in 2018

hounded for one. There are huge sums of money on offer.'

Rocky relationships

A memoir from the duchess could equal further disaster for the royal family – due to her rocky relationship with her in-laws, including brother-in-law Prince William.

After marrying Prince Harry back in 2018, Meghan hinted that she was unhappy with her royal life the following year. Opening up during an ITV interview, she shared that she was 'not okay' – adding, 'I really tried to adopt this British sensibility of a "stiff upper lip", but I think what that does internally is probably really damaging.' Less than six months later, the couple announced their plans to step back as senior working royals. The pair relocated

across the pond, now residing in Montecito, California, with their children Archie, five, and Lilibet, three.

Months after leaving Britain, Meghan and Harry made several shocking allegations during a sit-down interview with Oprah Winfrey. Stating that there were 'concerns and conversations about how dark Archie's skin might be', Meghan also recalled how her sister-in-law Kate Middleton, 43, left her in tears on her wedding day. After the interview aired, Prince William, also 43,

responded, 'We are very much not a racist family.'

The Sussex duo once again seemed to take aim at the palace last year, this time in the form of Harry's bombshell memoir, *Spare*. After alleging that William called Meghan 'difficult', 'rude' and 'abrasive,' Harry recalled how one argument with his older brother turned physical – writing, *...he grabbed me by the collar, ripping my necklace, and knocked me to the floor.*

It's well known that the duchess kept diaries during her time in the royal family, detailing her many ups and downs. And in 2022, Meghan hinted that she may one day speak about her experiences – saying, 'I've never had to sign anything that restricts me from talking.'

While it's not known what her next career steps will be, our source says they will no doubt be impressive. And memoir or not, having Meghan back in the spotlight is a cause for panic for the royals.

The source reveals, 'Meghan's big focus is on her series, which ties in very directly with her brand roll out. There's even been some buzz that she's considering having her own lifestyle magazine, something like what Oprah and Martha Stewart have, either online or possibly in print as well.'

'Meghan is charging into 2025 with plans to make it her biggest year yet. She wants to prove all the haters wrong and really hit it out of the park this year.'

Kate's big win over future for the children

The Princess of Wales has put her foot down when it comes to Prince George's new school

After years of discussion, it was believed that the Prince and Princess of Wales had set on Prince

George attending Eton. However, it now appears the couple have made a U-turn and Kate, 42, has had the final word, with William, also 42, no longer insisting his eldest follows in his footsteps.

Instead, Prince George, 11, and his siblings will board at Kate's former school, the prestigious Marlborough College in Wiltshire.

Usually, the Prince and Princess of Wales present a united front, but the subject of their children's education has reportedly caused numerous rows over the years – all of which have now come to an end with this latest agreement.

Although Kate and William have finally settled on a school – much to the delight of the parents of Marlborough's pupils – there is still much to decide before George enrolls at age 13.

A source at the £59,000-a-year institution revealed that there had been an intense discussion on which of the school houses would be best suited to Prince George.

There are six all-boys' houses, six all-girls' houses and four mixed

houses, either dotted around the 286-acre school campus or in the nearby town of Marlborough.

The source said, 'Parents have been talking about nothing else and discussions have really ramped up in recent weeks, but security is obviously a massive consideration.'

'Prince George will have to stay in an "in house" – these are the houses that are around the main quad of the school. The "out houses" are scattered down the Bath Road, and these present more of a security risk as they are just big houses on their own and involve a lot more walking around, which is the downside



The subject of schooling caused plenty of rows between the couple

Kate loved her time at Marlborough College



Now Charlotte and George can attend school together again



of Marlborough.'

Insiders have confirmed that when he begins his schooling, Prince George will be assigned to C1 House, an all-boys' house for 59 pupils in College Court. This was deemed the most secure location for the young future king as it's located right in the heart of the school. The particular house also has a royal connection — the relatives of Henry VIII's third wife, Jane Seymour, lived there until the mid-16th century.

Prince George and his siblings Charlotte, nine, and Louis, six, currently attend Lambrook School, in Berkshire, which educates pupils until the age of 13, but, as George is turning 12 this year, the matter of his secondary school education has naturally been at the forefront of his parents' minds.

Although Kate and Wills toured Eton last June, Kate was then spotted at Marlborough College in October, possibly scoping out the grounds of her school choice for the young heir.

Of course, choosing Marlborough College over Eton has one main advantage — now, Princess Charlotte can attend school alongside her brothers. Eton is an all-boys establishment while Marlborough has been fully co-educational since 1989.

A source told a newspaper, 'They've decided that he and sister Charlotte will attend boarding

school together. This way, George and Charlotte will have a few years where they'll overlap at the same school.'

In a recent newsletter, royal commenter Jane Barr noted, 'The Waleses have also shown a preference for keeping their

children together in school, which they could continue to do if they sent George to Marlborough.'

Although Marlborough may not have been Prince William's first choice,

it's likely a comfort for the family that their children can now tackle school side-by-side.

While Kate's 2024 cancer diagnosis and subsequent treatment may have forced her to take a step back from public life, she by no means took a step back in familial matters and has clearly made her voice heard in the matter of George's education. It comes as a surprise to no one that Princess Catherine was advocating for Marlborough College given her own difficult school days.

It has been well-documented that the princess 'hated' her time at the all-girls boarding school, Downe House, but thrived once she transferred to the co-educational Marlborough, where she swiftly joined both the hockey and cross-country teams.

Her house tutor, Joan Gall, said, 'When she arrived, she was very quiet. Coming to a big school like

'Parents have been talking'

Continued over the page...

Bella 11

Marlborough was difficult, but she settled in quickly.'

It soon became a family affair once Kate – who was crowned 'person most likely to be loved by everybody' in the yearbook at her graduation – was joined at Marlborough by her younger sister, Pippa, 40, and later by her brother James, 37.

While Kate was insistent that George should attend her alma mater, Prince William was equally keen that his son should attend the Berkshire-based Eton College, near their home in Windsor. They had also reportedly considered Oundle School in Northamptonshire before they landed on Marlborough College.

Their decision to stray from Eton is unlikely to raise eyebrows in the Palace as his own schooling was different from his dad King Charles's. Both William and Harry, 40, attended Eton College, as well as multiple UK Prime Ministers such as David Cameron

and Boris Johnson. William has spoken fondly of his time at the school. However, Harry was slightly less keen on the institution and admitted that he found it a 'shock' when he first arrived.

While several other royals also attended Eton – namely Queen Elizabeth's first cousins Prince Edward the Duke of Kent, Prince Richard the Duke of Gloucester, and Prince Michael of Kent – William and Harry actually broke previous royal traditions by attending the college.

From 1962 to 1967, their father King Charles went to Gordonstoun, a co-educational boarding school in Scotland, which was also attended by the late Prince Philip in his youth. However, since Charles reportedly hated Gordonstoun – dubbing it 'Colditz in kilts' and a 'prison sentence' – he wholeheartedly supported his sons' switch to Eton.

'It was a shock for Harry'



William was also keen for the children to stay together



The matter of the children's schooling has finally been put to bed



Marlborough College

The Waleses just want what's best for their kids



Their mother, Princess Diana, also undoubtedly weighed in seeing as her father and brother had both spoken highly of their own days at Eton.

Marlborough College isn't exactly devoid of any royal connection. Aside from his mother, George's second cousin Princess Eugenie, 34, also attended the college from 2003 to 2008.

The King, then Prince of Wales, even visited the institution in 2004 – just a few years after his future daughter-in-law would graduate – to unveil a commemorative sarsen stone on the site where Marlborough's Royal Castle once stood.

Only time will tell how Kate and

Wills handle their firstborn heading off to boarding school – just because it is a royal tradition doesn't make it easier for his doting parents.

Over the years, the Prince and Princess of Wales have chosen to stay at home with their children as much as possible, keeping overseas trips to a minimum, especially following the Queen's death in September 2022.

However, once George heads off to Marlborough College, it won't be long until he's followed by Charlotte and Louis, leaving William and Kate alone in Adelaide Cottage for the first time in many years.

By Sarah O'Byrne. Pictures Alamy



Alongside brother Charles in 2023

‘Andrew is an ABSOLUTE DISAST

King Charles’s brother has found himself in hot water again – and the royal family are not happy

The relationship between Prince Andrew and his brother King Charles has always been a fractious one, a divide which was not helped by the uncovering of the Duke of York’s close friendship with Jeffrey Epstein and the subsequent embarrassment of his infamous *Newsnight* interview, and its associated fallout.

And now there’s a fresh blow for Andrew, 64, with it being revealed that a police file has accused him of filing financial documents under a fake name back in 2002.

It has been alleged he used the

pseudonym ‘Andrew Inverness’ to set up Naples Gold Limited – a company said to have been created to ‘facilitate a charitable initiative to conserve the rainforest’ – with Johan Eliasch, who was former Prime Minister Gordon Brown’s special representative for deforestation and clean energy while he was in office.

It is believed that Andrew used the false name, seemingly inspired by his title as the Earl of Inverness, to register four companies at Companies House.

And just before Christmas, the prince’s friendships garnered

unwanted publicity once again after it was revealed Andrew had links to Yang Tengbo – a man who has been banned from entering the UK on national security grounds after it was alleged he is a Chinese spy.

Andrew’s alleged connection to Yang was revealed in December when a judge lifted a court order granting the Chinese businessman anonymity.

Despite the denial, Andrew’s involvement with somebody who authorities felt was ‘likely to pose a threat to national security’ is just the latest in a long line of



ER'

Andrew has been linked to an alleged Chinese spy



Prince Andrew has caused yet more drama with King Charles

embarrassments the prince has brought to his family.

A source says, 'The drama and embarrassment with Andrew just never seems to end. Andrew is an absolute disaster, but no one can contain him. He seems to have a knack for humiliating himself, and the royals in the process.'

'It's no secret that Charles is already at the end of his rope, and this has only exacerbated things. Andrew was quick to distance himself from Tengbo as soon as he learned about the dodgy spy connection, but the feeling at the Palace is that he ought to have done better due diligence at the time.'

'If it were anyone else in the family, they might get a bit of sympathy, but Andrew has put his foot in it so many times. He's just a walking PR nightmare.'

Yang has strongly denied the allegations against him, saying he had 'done nothing wrong or unlawful,' adding, 'the widespread description of me as a "spy" is entirely untrue.'

He said in a statement, 'I am an independent self-made entrepreneur and I have always aimed to foster partnerships and build bridges between East and West. I have dedicated my professional life in the UK to

building links between British and Chinese businesses. My activities have played a part in bringing hundreds of millions of pounds of investment into the UK.'

'I built my private life in the UK over two decades and love the country as my second home. I would never do anything to

harm the interests of the UK.'

The Special Immigration Appeals Commission made Yang's case public, which revealed that

he – who is also known as Chris Yang – was a close confidant of the prince and was able to act on his behalf with investors in China.

It was later suggested that he had used his connection to secure invitations to Buckingham Palace and other royal residences.

'People in the royal Firm are just wringing their hands, wondering how much leniency or tolerance they can possibly show Andrew before they just fling him out on his ear for good,' the source continues.

'He's not done anything technically wrong here, but that doesn't take away from the fact that he's once again at the centre of an unsavoury scandal. The family, especially Charles and Camilla, are sick and tired of him stressing them out. They've gone

'The Firm are wringing their hands'



At the Easter Sunday Service last year

above and beyond to tolerate him, but here he is again, causing them shame and humiliation.’

In 2019, it was announced that Andrew had ‘stepped back from royal duties for the foreseeable future’ after his friendship with Epstein was exposed.

More scandal followed when Virginia Giuffre alleged that she was trafficked by Epstein at the age of 17 to have sex with Andrew on three separate occasions, which he has vehemently denied. But, in March 2022, he settled out-of-court for an undisclosed amount, which was later reported to be estimated at around £3 million.

The late Queen Elizabeth II –

who is thought to have viewed Andrew as her ‘favourite son’ – stripped him of his titles and privileges when the friendship was first uncovered but allowed him to continue living at Royal Lodge on the Windsor estate, where he holds a 75-year lease.

And although it was reported that the King was hoping to get Andrew to leave the £30 million property – which he pays £250 a week to live in – he is yet to move out.

But one clear sign that Charles may finally be ready to exclude Andrew from the royal family once and for all came on Christmas Day, when the King’s younger



The King and Queen are said to be frustrated with Andrew’s antics



With ex-wife
Sarah Ferguson



Eugenie and Jack are still in
touch with Harry and Meghan



King Charles
and Camilla

brother was not included in the family's celebrations.

Following the revelation of Andrew's connection to Yang, it was revealed that Andrew would 'honourably withdraw' from the events – which included their annual church service at Sandringham.

Instead, the King and Queen attended the service with William and Kate and their three children Prince George, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louis, as well as Prince Edward and his wife, Sophie, Duchess of

Edinburgh and their children Lady Louise Mountbatten-Windsor

and James Mountbatten-Windsor, Earl of Wessex.

However, Prince Andrew and his ex-wife Sarah Ferguson's eldest daughter Princess Beatrice attended the service

with her husband Edoardo Mapelli Mozzi and his son, Christopher Woolf, from a previous marriage.

'He's a walking PR nightmare'

Their attendance may have left some royal fans surprised as Beatrice and her sister, Princess Eugenie, are at the heart of another divide which has caused friction within the family.

Beatrice and Eugenie seem to be the only members of the royal family who have stayed in close contact with their cousin Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle, who stepped down as working royals in January 2020.

Eugenie – who was friends with Meghan before she met Harry – and her husband Jack Brooksbank have moved into the Duke and Duchess of Sussex's former home,

Frogmore Cottage, and have flown to the United States several times over the years to spend time with the couple.

In fact, Harry and Meghan's self-titled Netflix documentary included footage of Eugenie attending the Super Bowl in 2022.

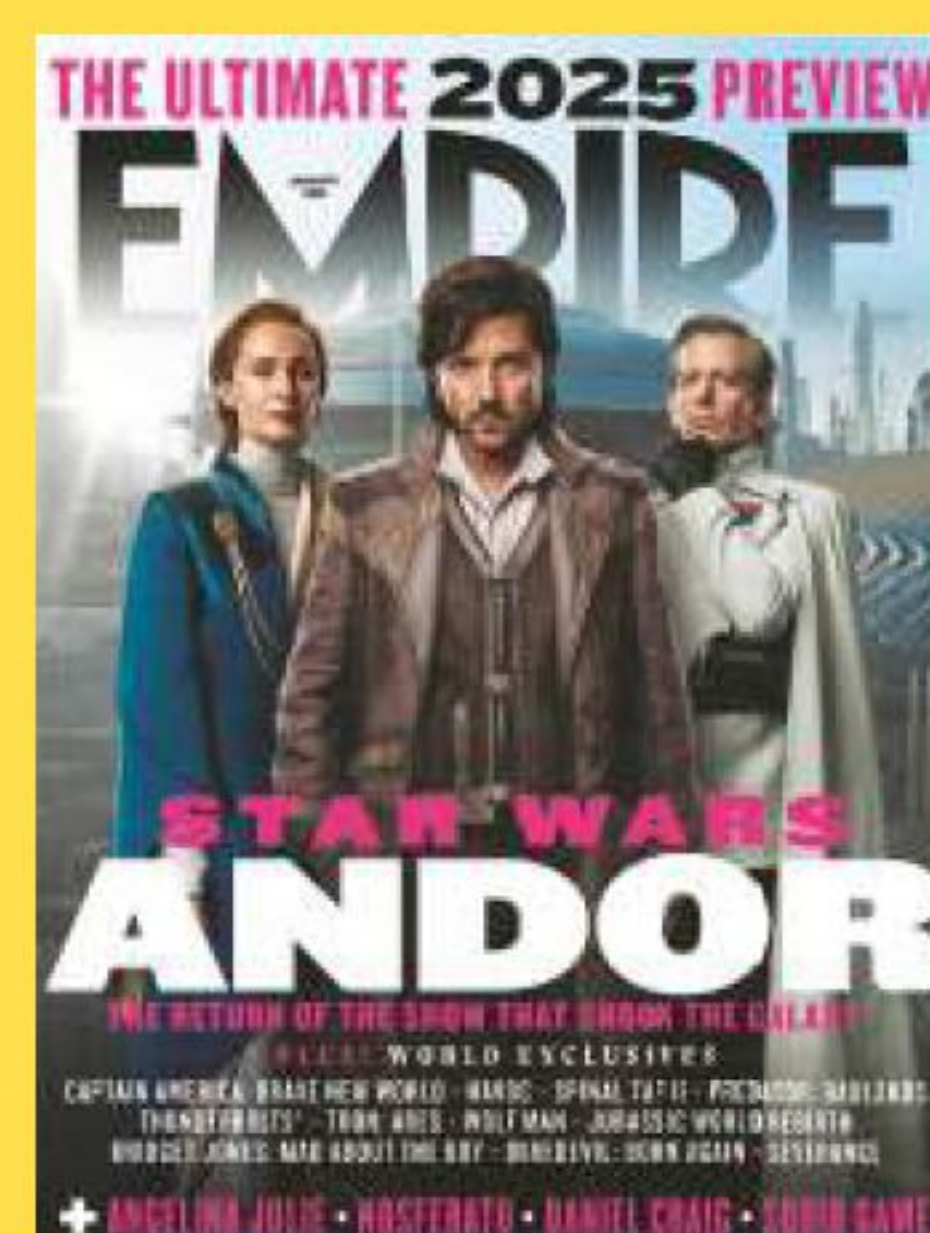
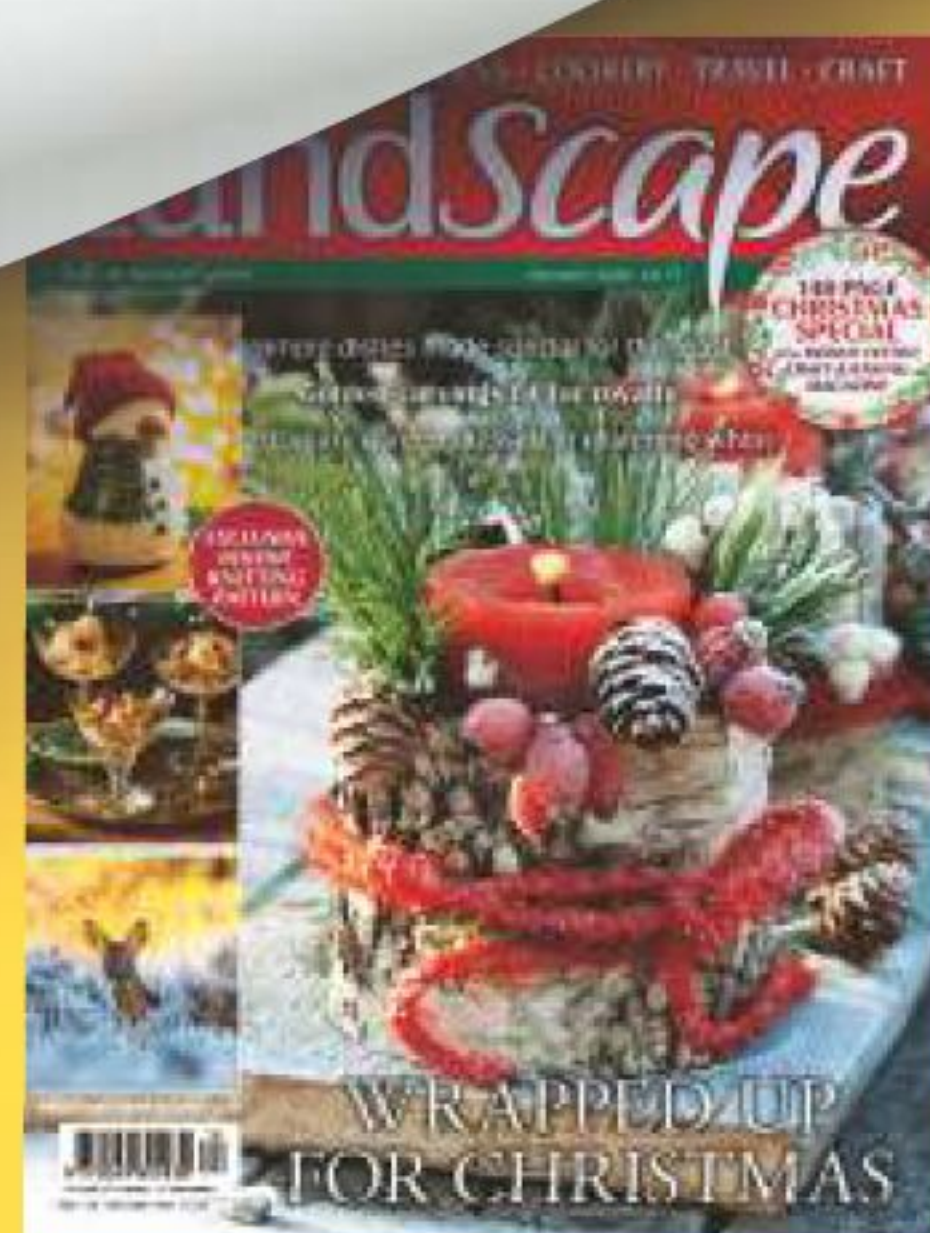
Royal expert Duncan Larcombe said at the time, 'The royals have stayed quite consistent and firm when it comes to Harry and Meghan. Eugenie is breaking ranks from the rest of the royals by being seen so publicly to endorse Harry and Meghan in their new life.'

So, with Andrew's latest scandal and Eugenie's continued friendship with Harry, it seems only time will tell how much patience King Charles has left with the Yorks.

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Royal LOVE DRAMAS

For decades, the world has been fascinated by the affairs, divorces and heartaches of the royal family's rollercoaster romantic lives...

Margaret and Antony
Armstrong-Jones in
the Bahamas in 1967
– they were already
said to be having
marriage problems



The beautiful Princess **WITH A TROUBLED LOVE LIFE**

The late Queen's sister
Princess Margaret was a royal
rebel who defied the rules



of South Africa. 'We rode together every morning in that wonderful country, in marvellous weather,' she later told a confidante. 'That's when I really fell in love with him.'

It was a love affair they could have continued to keep secret if they'd wished, but Margaret was growing increasingly troubled by the furtive nature of their romance, conducted mainly in her private apartment at Clarence House. She wanted to marry Townsend and the first step towards that was

to make their love public.

Sadly, it was a relationship that would bring Margaret happiness and heartache in equal measure. For Townsend was a divorced father of two, and divorce wasn't recognised by the Church of England back then, making it virtually impossible for Princess Margaret to marry him. Not only that, since she was under 25, she also had to ask her sister for permission.

The Queen was undoubtedly caught in a very difficult position; she didn't want to keep her sister

from the man she loved, but she also needed to play by the strict, complex rules of the monarchy.

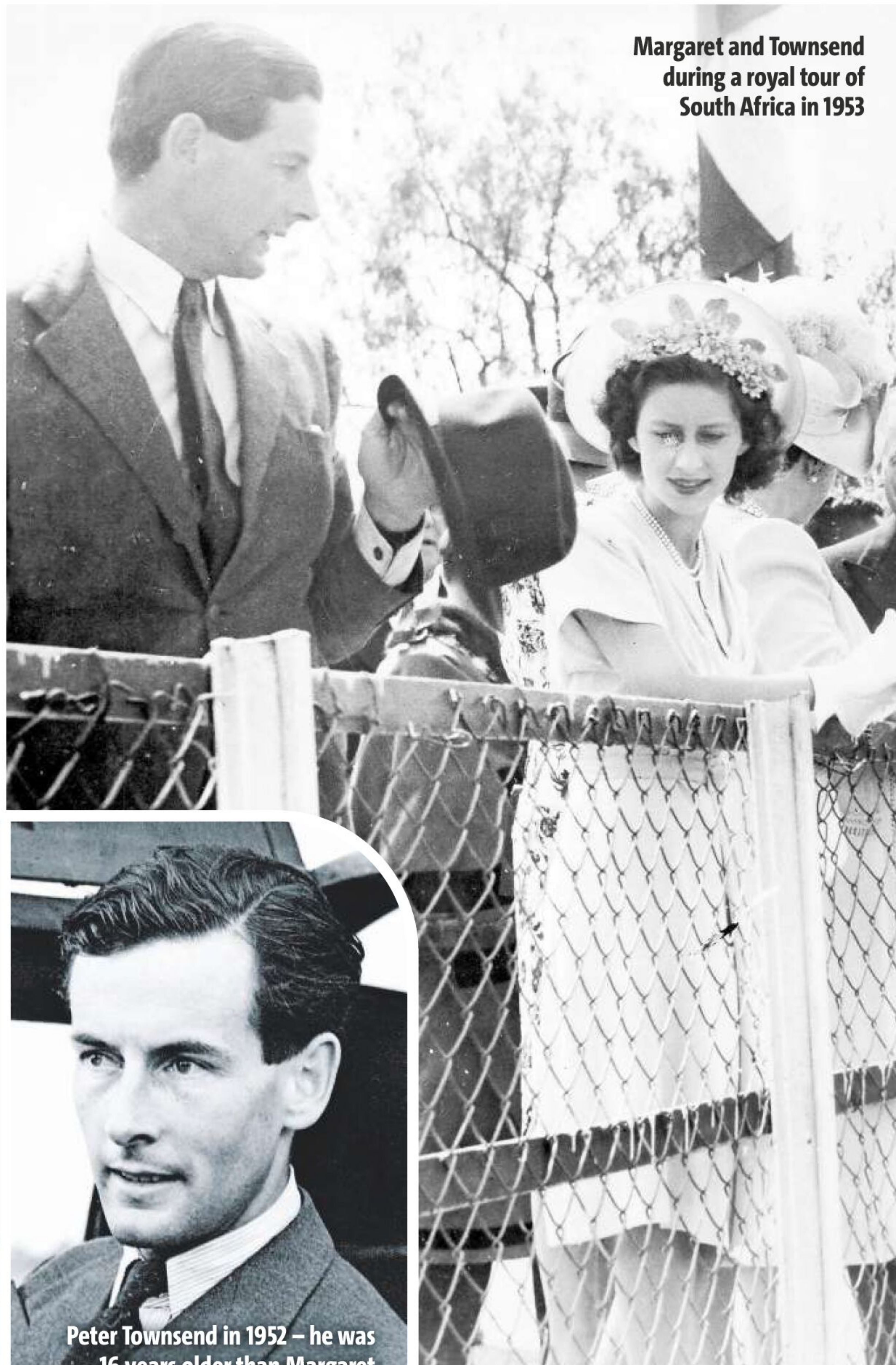
'It was decided that the best plan would be for Townsend to leave the country for a year – at the end of which they were asked to wait another year,' says author Anne De Courcy. 'Townsend and Margaret saw each other again for the first time on 12 October 1955. Less than three agonising weeks later, the two of them concluded that their love could have no happy ending.'

The final straw came, it seems, when Margaret was told that if she did marry Townsend she would have to give up her royal

rights and leave the country for at least five years. It was a step too far for the princess who released a statement that Townsend had written for her, announcing they had decided to part.

'I would like it to be known that I have decided not to marry Group Captain Peter Townsend,' the statement said. 'Mindful of the Church's teaching that Christian marriage is indissoluble, and conscious of my duty to the Commonwealth, I have resolved to put these considerations before any others. I have reached this decision entirely alone, and in doing so I have been strengthened by the unfailing

Margaret and Townsend during a royal tour of South Africa in 1953



She was known for her beauty and being a glamorous trendsetter. But Princess Margaret Rose also had a secret. A very big secret. And on 2 June 1953 – Coronation Day – while the world watched her older sister being crowned Queen Elizabeth II, she made a very daring move.

Surrounded by television cameras (this was the first televised coronation in history), the 23-year-old princess tenderly plucked a piece of fluff from the lapel of the handsome man standing next to her. The man in question was dashing airman and war hero Group Captain Peter Townsend.

This seemingly small but intimate gesture spoke volumes about the nature of her relationship with Townsend, her father's former aide – who was also 16 years older than the young princess. Rumours were already rife that the third in line to the throne was having an affair, but nobody knew who with. Until now.

In fact, Margaret had been in love with Townsend, a trusted member of the royal family's inner circle, since she was 17, having become smitten during a royal tour



Peter Townsend in 1952 – he was 16 years older than Margaret



Queen Elizabeth with her sister in Mustique in 1977



The princess enjoyed wild parties at her beautiful villa



With the Italian fashion designer Valentino in 1968



Chatting with Elton John in 1974



Margaret meets The Beatles at the premiere of their film *Help!*

support and devotion of Group Captain Townsend.'

In his autobiography more than 20 years later, Townsend reflected, 'She could have married me only if she had been prepared to give up everything – her position, her prestige, her privy purse. I simply hadn't the weight, I knew it, to counterbalance all she would have lost.'

In choosing duty over love, many people still believe that the princess gave up the only man she ever truly loved. But whether heartbroken or not, Margaret continued to live a life of luxury and decadence. She'd always been a bit of a wild child – aged 19, she was photographed in a nightclub smoking a cigarette in a black

cigarette holder, at a time when women rarely smoked in public. Now in her twenties, she had already established herself as a party princess who knew how to enjoy herself. A typical morning was said to begin with breakfast in bed and finish with a vodka pick-me-up followed by a four-course lunch with half a bottle of wine.

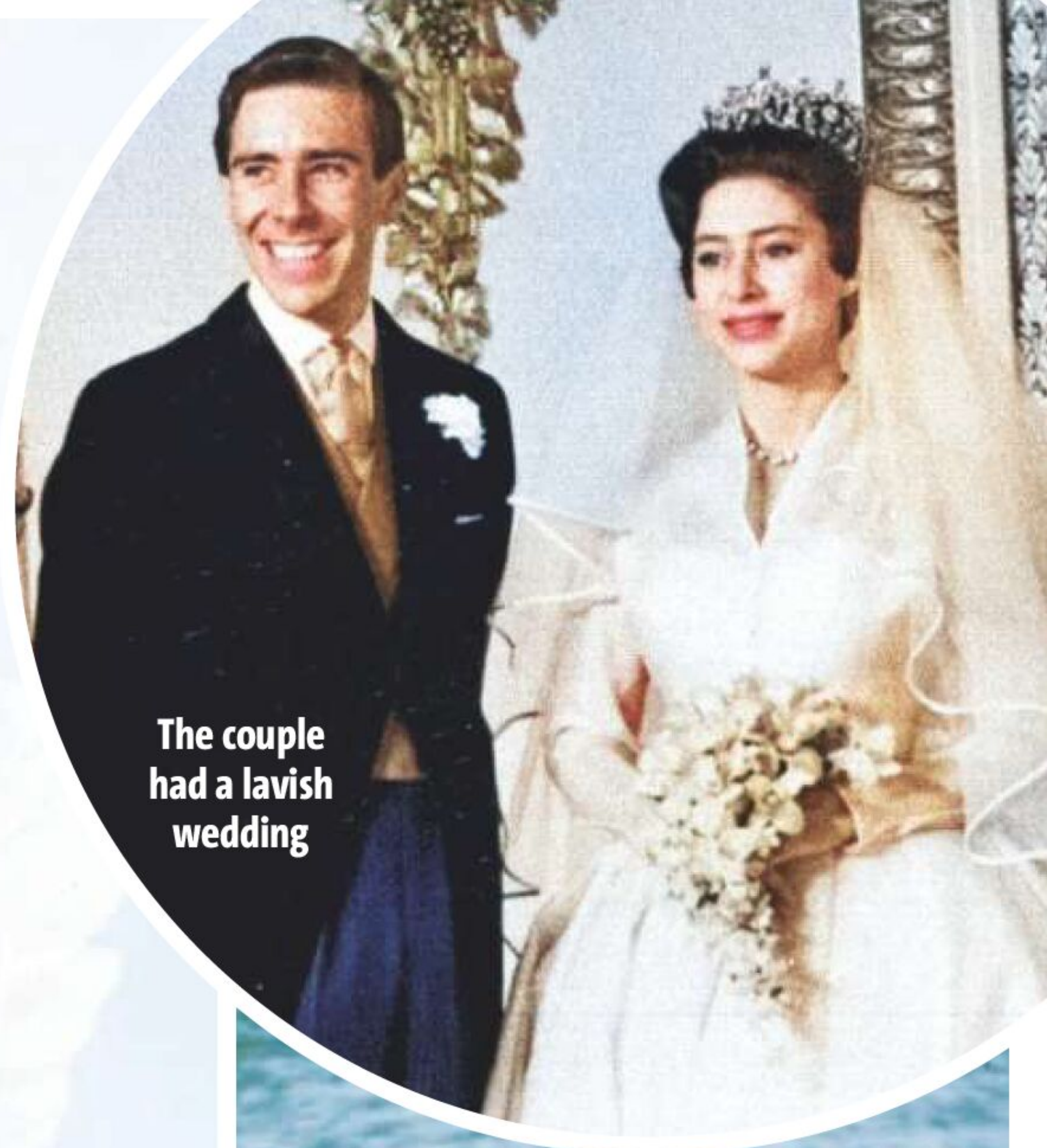
It wasn't long before the beautiful young socialite had found another suitor – a photographer named Antony Armstrong-Jones who she met at a dinner party. In February 1960, a short while after hearing Peter Townsend had become engaged to a 19-year-old Belgian woman, Princess Margaret announced her own engagement.

Their wedding just three months later was a lavish affair – far grander than her older sister's in post-war Britain – and included a costly £60,000 six-week honeymoon onboard the luxurious royal yacht. It was also the first British royal wedding to be broadcast live on television, with around 300 million people tuning in to watch.

Afterwards, Lord and Lady Snowdon (as they were now known) lived glamorous lives in 'swinging sixties' London and seemed outwardly happy – for a few years at least. They were part of the 'arty' jet-set and, like the young royals of today, enjoyed spending time with celebrities, actors and musicians.

However, they both had rebellious streaks and quickly developed reckless lifestyles to match. Within a few short years they were drifting apart, seeing other people. While her husband indulged in a series of brief flings, Princess Margaret spent a lot of time at her holiday house on Mustique – then the most exclusive island in the Caribbean – an extravagant 10-acre villa which she described as the only place she could 'truly relax' and where she threw wild cocktail parties. She was soon linked to a string of famous men, including Warren Beatty, Richard Harris, David Niven, Mick Jagger (who she described as 'sexy and exciting') and even gangster-

In 1972, on the Pacific
Island of Tuvalu



The couple
had a lavish
wedding



The princess spent
much of her time on
the paradise island

turned-actor John Bindon.

Then, in 1973, Princess Margaret fell for a man who was quite possibly her most unlikely match to date: a landscape gardener and aristocrat called Roddy Llewellyn, who was 17 years her junior. Yet against all the odds, the relationship seemed to work. They were soon inseparable and Margaret in particular was smitten.

Then the paparazzi caught them. When photos of Margaret and her young lover frolicking on the beach in Mustique were published in newspapers in February 1976, there was a public

outcry. Margaret was still a married woman who seemed to be flagrantly committing adultery. Aged 47, she was described as a predatory older woman who had taken a toy boy, she was branded a 'floozy' and a 'royal parasite'.

Even the late Queen was appalled by her sister's behaviour. 'What are we going to do with my sister's guttersnipe life?' she is said to have asked her then Prime Minister Harold Wilson.

Bombarded by the press, Roddy himself even issued a statement. 'I much regret any embarrassment caused to Her Majesty the Queen and the royal family, for whom

I wish to express the greatest respect, admiration and loyalty,' it read. 'Could we please be permitted by the media, who have besieged us, to carry on with our work and private lives without further interference.'

The following month the Snowdons publicly acknowledged their marriage had broken down and divorced two years later.

Margaret's relationship with Roddy weathered the storm and lasted a further five years. They split in 1981, but remained friends. Roddy himself went on to marry Tatiana Soskin and have three children. Years later, he

reflected of his time with Princess Margaret, 'I didn't think about the consequences of such a high-profile affair. If we all had crystal balls, we'd know which horse to back, wouldn't we? I was just following my heart.'

After splitting from Roddy, Margaret's health then began to deteriorate, thought to have been made worse by her smoking and drinking. She died aged 71.

With time, Elizabeth's attitude towards her sister's lover also seemed to soften. Tellingly, at Margaret's funeral in 2002, she told Lady Anne Glenconner, the person who had introduced them both, 'It was rather difficult at moments, but I thank you so much for introducing Princess Margaret to Roddy because he made her really happy.'

Words: Kate Corr. Photos: Getty, PA



The handsome Prince **and his many female friends...**

The Queen & Prince Philip's
74-year marriage was
blighted by rumours



Actress Pat
Kirkwood



The dashing
young prince

It was October 1948; the then Queen was eight months pregnant with her first child – Charles – when, on a boozy night out, Prince Philip stumbled into the dressing room of a rather famous woman.

Her name was Pat Kirkwood, she was the West End's biggest star – the highest paid entertainer of her day – famous for her incredible legs, which were once described as 'the eighth wonder of the world'. Philip wasn't alone, he was accompanied that night by his pal Baron Nahum, a photographer and royal equerry who also happened to be Kirkwood's boyfriend.

What happened next has been widely reported. Philip apparently drove the beautiful actress, then 27, and her boyfriend from the London Hippodrome to a Mayfair restaurant, then on to a nightclub

where he and Kirkwood danced cheek-to-cheek until dawn. They then all went back to Baron's flat for scrambled eggs.

The rumour mill was soon hard at work, and with headlines around the world screaming, 'The Prince And The Showgirl!' it was to become a scandal that young Pat Kirkwood was never able to live down.

Until her death in 2007, the actress always denied anything untoward had happened, and that the prince was simply letting his hair down. 'I suspect he felt trapped and rarely got a chance to be himself,' she said later. 'I think I got off on the right foot because I made him laugh.'

Nevertheless, she found it impossible to escape the rumours and couldn't understand why Prince Philip didn't help to protect her reputation by denying them

'The Queen denied it'



The Queen and Prince
Philip at Balmoral

Ballerina
Galina
Ulanova



himself, which he never did. Years later she reportedly told a journalist, 'A lady is not normally expected to defend her honour. It is the gentleman who should do that. I would have had a happier and easier life if Prince Philip, instead of coming uninvited to my dressing room, had gone home to his pregnant wife on the night in question.'

The ballerina

In series two of *The Crown*, Philip was linked to Russian-born dancer Galina Ulanova, described then as one of the greatest ballerinas in the world. The series showed the Queen discovering a photo of Galina in Philip's briefcase, and when she later attends a performance of *Giselle* featuring the ballerina, the Queen decides not to meet her.

However, there is no evidence that Prince Philip had an affair with the beautiful dancer who, then aged 46, had a reputation for being aloof and private. In fact, he was never romantically linked with her at all, making *The Crown* suggestion appear fictional.

A five-month stag do?

In October 1956, Prince Philip said goodbye to his wife and young family and embarked on a five-month sailing trip onboard the royal yacht, with his pal Mike Parker. Rumours of wild parties and women being smuggled on to the ship were rife, until the Queen – unusually – decided to issue a statement denying there were any marital problems.

'It is quite untrue that there is a



Taking a day off from
royal duties in 1954

rift between the Queen and the Duke,' it read. In fact, she seemed quite relaxed about Philip's behaviour, even commenting, 'There's nothing worse than to fence a man in and stop him from doing what he wants.' Perhaps she was remembering her father's advice to her, 'Remember, he's

a sailor. They come in on the tide.'

But the gossip didn't stop. Over the years, Philip was linked with all kinds of women, from Hollywood actress Merle Oberon to the author Daphne du Maurier and even UK TV personality



TV personality
Katie Boyle

Katie Boyle. At one point he was also rumoured to be the father of French actress H  l  ne Cordet's two children. The actress dismissed these claims as 'ridiculous'.

Royal experts, meanwhile, insist none of the famous women Philip was reportedly attracted to were his type anyway. 'He was never been one for chasing actresses. His interests were quite different,' says Sarah Bradford, author of *Queen Elizabeth II: Her Life In Our Times*. 'The women he went for were always younger than him, usually beautiful and highly aristocratic.'

The toffs

Rumours about a romantic liaison between the late Duke and aristocrat Lady Penelope Brabourne lingered for years. Lady Penelope, 70, was one of Philip's long-term friends and confidantes, and was said to share his 'boisterous sense of humour'.

However, the Queen was always happy to include her as a regular guest at parties, which would seem rather unlikely if anything untoward was going on.

Lady Sacha Abercorn also admitted having a 'passionate friendship' with Prince Philip for more than 20 years, describing him as a man who 'needs a playmate'. But Lady Sacha, who died in December 2018, firmly denied there was any

physical
romance.

'Our friendship was very close, but I did not go to bed with him,' she said. 'He isn't like that.'

So what's the truth?

Despite all the gossip, there never seemed to be any proof of infidelity. 'People have often said, "He must have been unfaithful," but there is no

solid evidence for that,' says *The Crown*'s historical consultant Robert Lacey.

Royal author Ingrid Seward agrees. 'In my research I never got any conclusive answers,' she adds. 'No one is saying anything [about these stories] and probably won't. No one will say anything, because anything would be very hurtful to her [memory] if indeed they were true. But, there are lots of stories. You can't ignore it.'

It seems likely Prince Philip always just enjoyed being around pretty women. 'I think women just adored him because he was such a handsome specimen,' says Ingrid. 'And he had an amazing charm when he wanted to use it, an amazing charm.'

The prince himself always refused to be drawn on the rumours, but did once retaliate, telling a reporter in 1992, 'Have you ever stopped to think that, for the past 40 years, I have never moved anywhere without a policeman accompanying me? So how the hell could I get away with anything like that?'



The couple at
Buckingham
Palace



Actress Merle
Oberon

Words: Kate Corr Photos: PA

Anne and Mark got married in 1973



Princess Anne's turbulent first marriage

Love letters
and a secret
child...

It started off so well – he was a champion rider, they met while competing in the Olympic games and bonded over their love of horses. When Captain Mark Phillips and Princess Anne married on 14 November 1973 – watched by a record 500 million people – everyone agreed it was a match made in heaven.

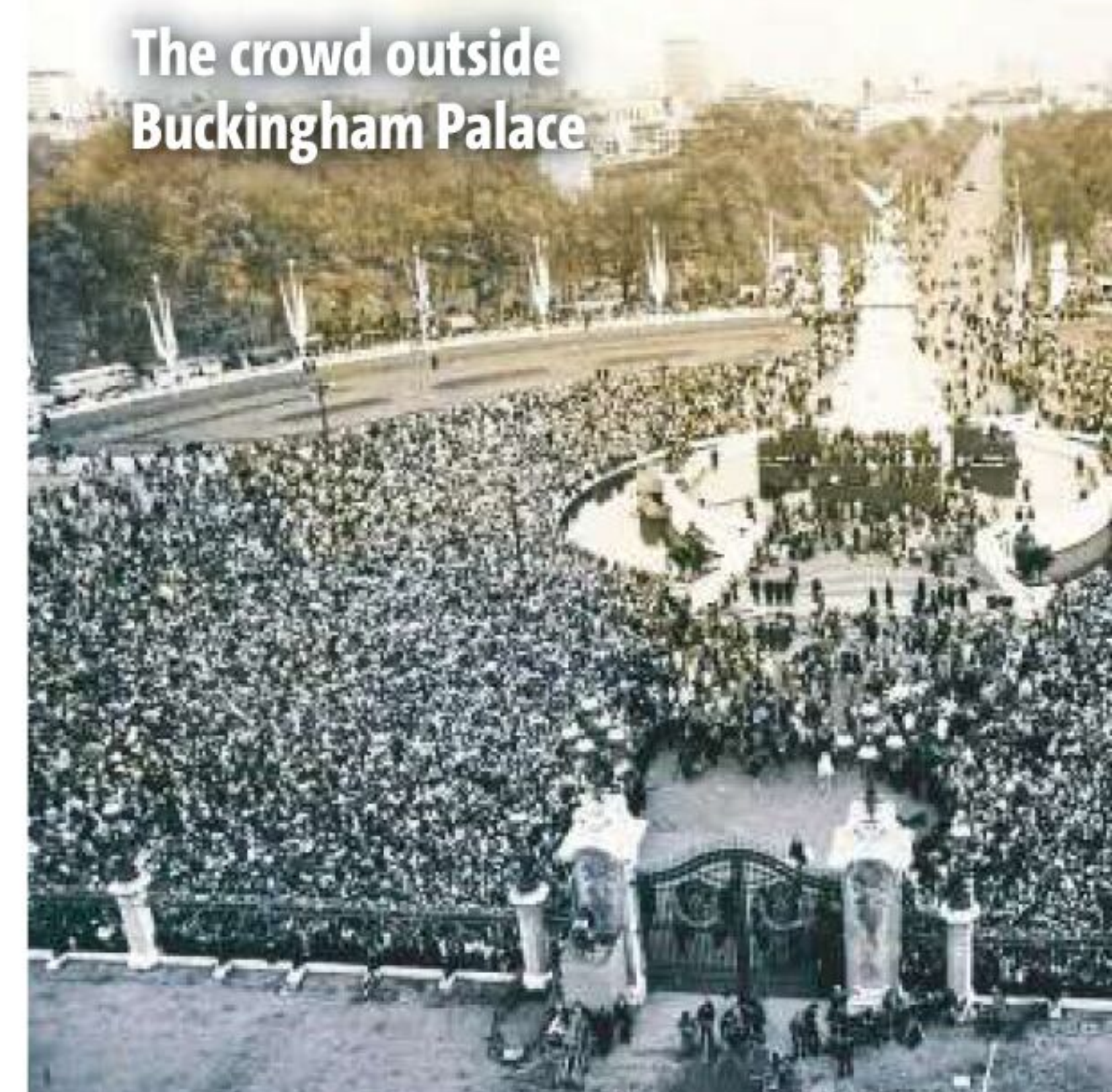
But, within a few short years, all

was not well. And after the birth of their two children, Peter in 1977, and Zara in 1981, the royal couple drifted further and further apart. By 1987 they were living virtually separate lives, only staying together, according to friends, for the sake of their children. Considering what was to happen next, it may have been better for both of them if they'd called it a day a bit sooner...

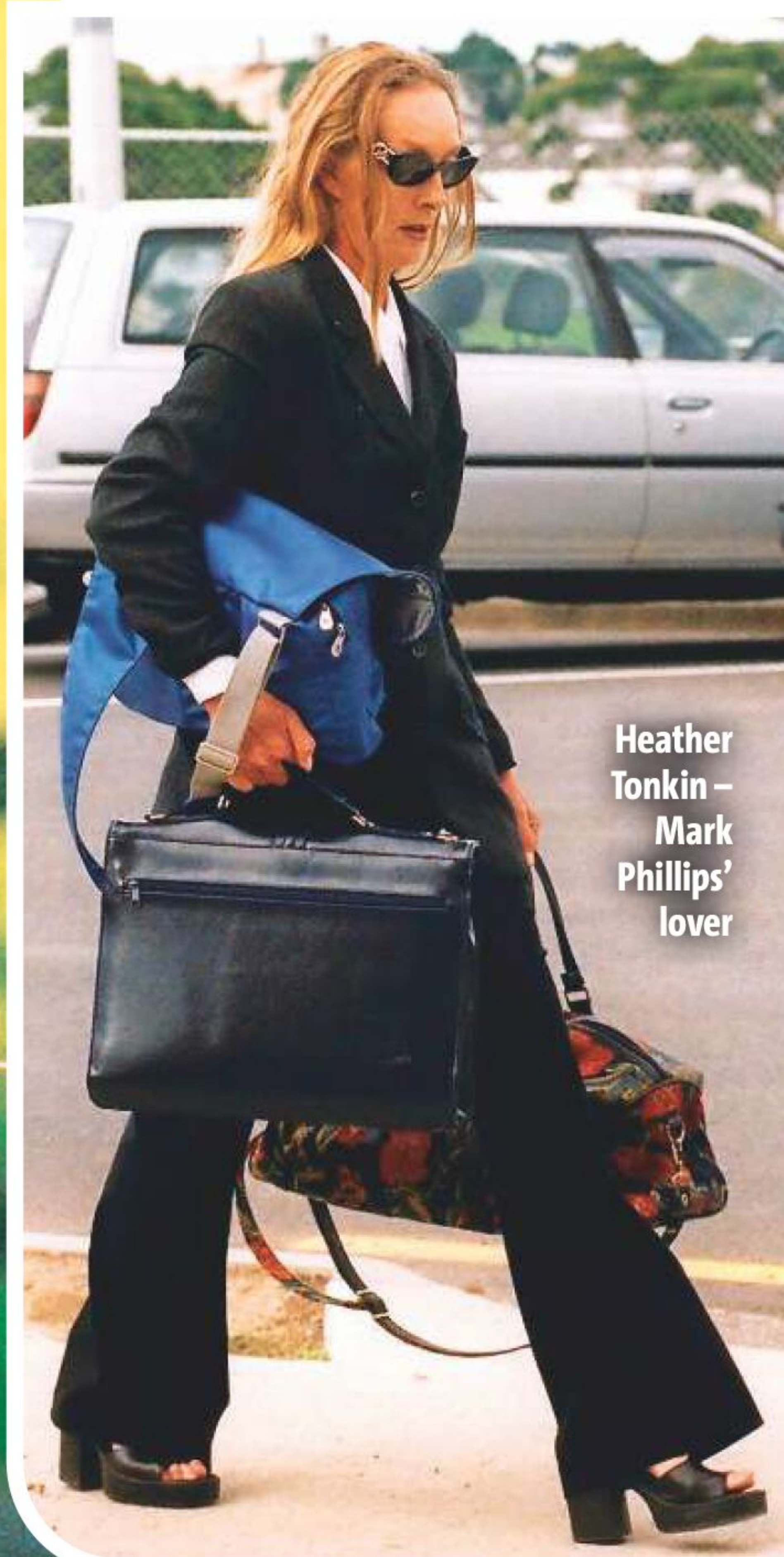
Letters 'too hot to handle'

In April 1989, Princess Anne found herself front-page tabloid news when four private letters were stolen from her apartment inside Buckingham Palace and sent anonymously to *The Sun*

The crowd outside Buckingham Palace



They drifted apart
a few years after
their wedding



Heather
Tonkin –
Mark
Phillips’
lover

newspaper. While the content of the letters was never made public – *The Sun* gave them straight to Scotland Yard – it quickly became clear that they were written to the married princess by Navy officer and royal equerry Timothy Laurence – and that their tone was romantic.

In a bid to stop speculation, the Palace released a statement saying the letters were personal and the subject of a police investigation. But a royal insider revealed, ‘Obviously Tim and the princess were physically attracted to each other, but their friendship goes deeper than that. He cares for her in a way that her husband does not.’

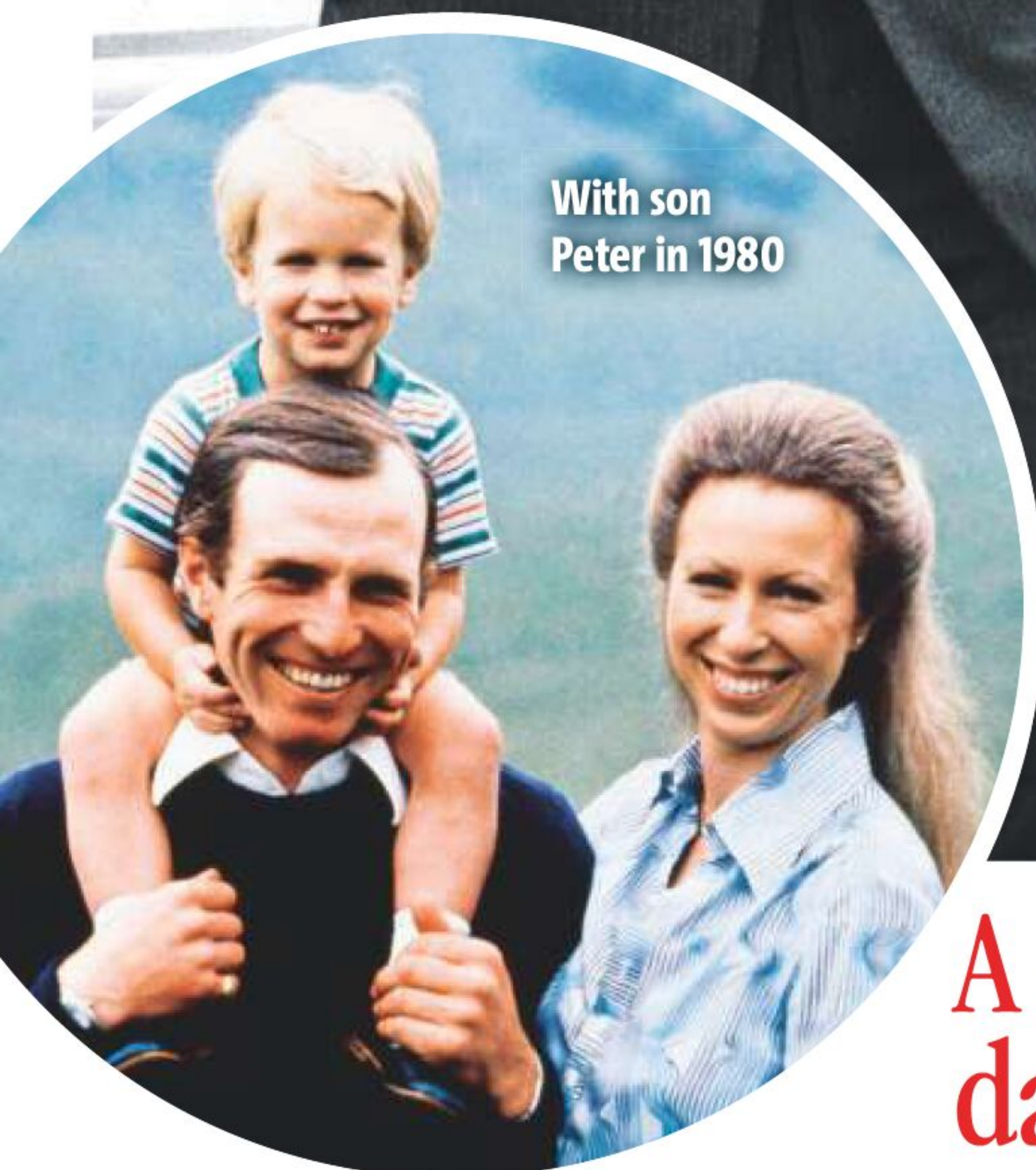
While some sources claimed the letters were ‘too hot to handle’, others believe they were not raunchy but written in affectionate terms by someone who was ‘clearly potty about her’.

When the story broke on 10 April, with headlines screaming ‘Can This Marriage Be Saved?’ and ‘Divorce Crisis At Palace’, Mark Phillips was 150 miles away, competing in a riding competition.

He told reporters, ‘I left home on Friday and have not spoken to



Princess Anne and Mark with the Queen



With son Peter in 1980

A secret daughter

Princess Anne since. I will be ringing home tonight on my car phone to find out what is going on.'

How that particular conversation went we'll never know, but the couple finally announced they were separating four months later in a statement saying their marriage had been 'under strain' for a number of years.

While for now, the spotlight – and perhaps even the blame for the collapse of their marriage – was on Princess Anne, this was all to change when details of Mark Phillips' extramarital affair came to light.

Mark met art teacher Heather Tonkin at an equestrian event in New Zealand. She admitted to being 'infatuated' by the British rider. When they met again the following year, this time in a hotel in Auckland, Mark apparently directed Heather to his bedroom by leaving his riding boots outside the door...

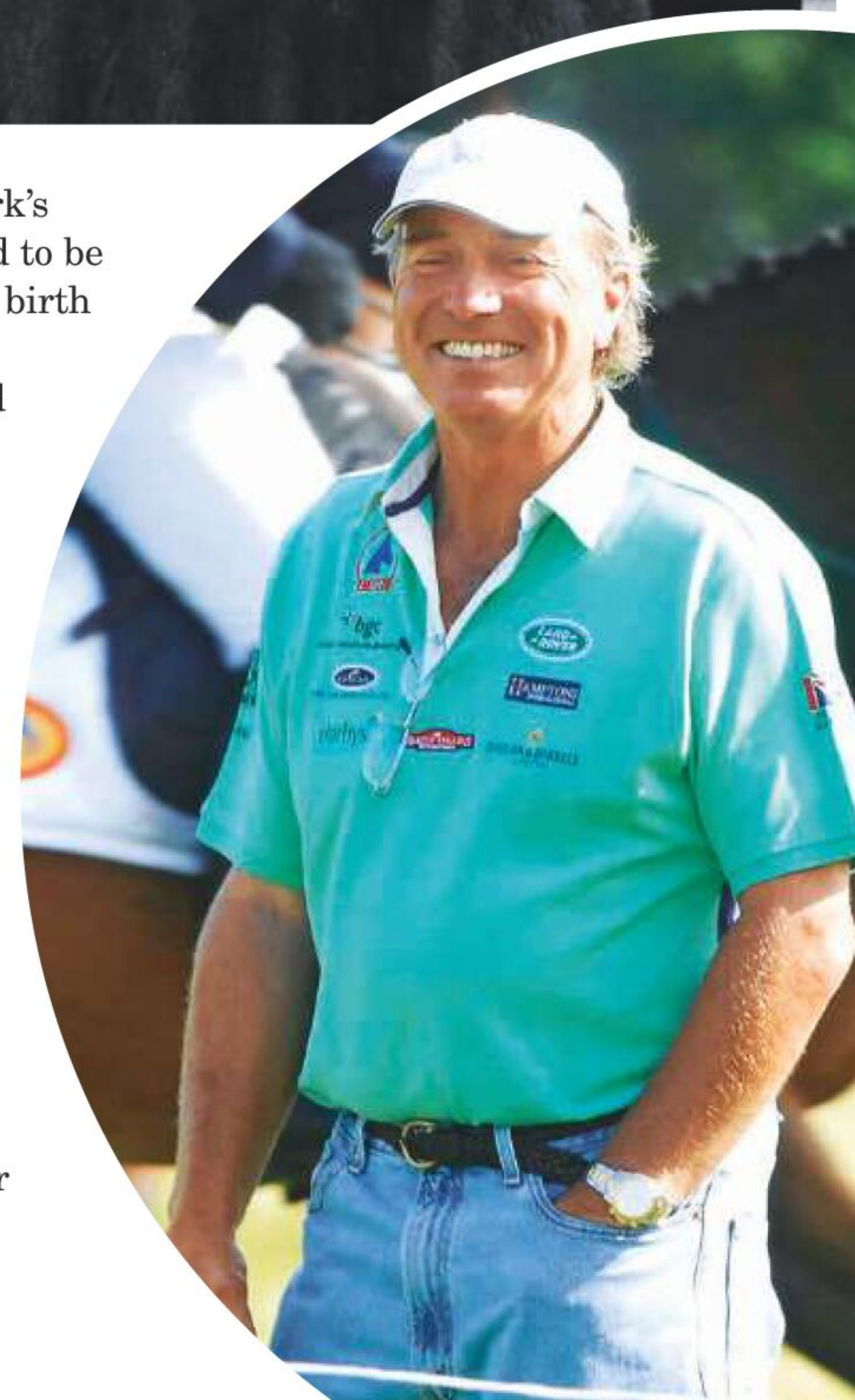
But what began as a one-night stand in 1985 was to become one of the royal family's biggest scandals in decades. For in 1991, Heather Tonkin publicly stated that Mark Phillips was the father of her five-year-old daughter Felicity.

'My ambition is to get Mark's public acceptance of her and to be able to put his name on her birth certificate,' she said.

The shocking claim turned out to be true and led to public disgrace for Mark, and his subsequent divorce from Princess Anne.

At first he tried to deny it, until it became clear he'd been making regular payments of around £6,000 a year to Tonkin for five years. But the mother of his child now wanted a better, more secure deal for her daughter.

DNA tests confirmed that Phillips was Felicity's father and Heather eventually



At the Windsor
Horse Trials in 1987



The Princess with
second husband Tim

a low-profile life in Auckland with their son and don't seem to have met any of the royal family.

While Zara spent part of her gap year in New Zealand, it's thought she didn't meet up with her half-sister. It seems unlikely that they ever will.

Happy ever after?

Princess Anne and Captain Mark Phillips were finally divorced on 23 April 1992 – the year the Queen famously called her 'annus horribilis', or horrible year – with Phillips receiving a 'modest' settlement. Only eight months later, Anne married the man who'd written her those heartfelt letters, Timothy Laurence. More than 30 years later, their marriage is still going strong.

Five years after their divorce, Mark also married again and had another daughter, Stephanie. But his marriage to Sandy Pflueger ended in 2012 when he fell for US equestrian Lauren Hough, almost 30 years his junior.

Yet despite their deeply troubled marriage, Princess Anne and her ex-husband remain on surprisingly friendly terms and are often seen laughing and chatting at public events, especially when their children Zara, now 43, and Peter, now 47, are around. Perhaps time, after all, is a great healer.

Words: Kate Corr. Photos: PA

The former
couple are on
good terms



received a settlement from him, believed to be around £350,000. But Felicity was never reunited with her dad. In fact, Mark has always refused to meet or have a relationship with Felicity, who is now a mother herself with a young son – his grandchild.

Felicity is not in touch with

any of her royal relations, but she shares a few undeniable similarities. Like her father and half-sister Zara – four years older than her – Felicity is horse-mad. A keen rider, she is also a vet who specialises in treating horses and her husband Tristan is a polo player. The couple live

Outside Buckingham Palace
following their engagement
announcement in 1981

Diana & Charles **'My wedding was the worst day of my life**

How the fairy-tale romance turned
into a nightmare divorce



29 July 1981: the wedding day



A kiss at the polo in 1985

A beautiful girl marries a handsome prince and lives happily ever after – it's the stuff of many a fairy story.

However, things were not quite so simple when Lady Diana Spencer became the Princess of

Wales more than 40 years ago in 1981.

What began as a fairy-tale relationship became plagued by media attention, plus the pressures of royal life, adultery, and, eventually, divorce.

As the daughter of John Spencer, the 8th Earl Spencer, and his wife Frances, Diana moved in high society circles, meaning that she was aware of Prince Charles from a very young age.

Penny Walker, Diana's piano teacher at West Heath, the school she attended up to the age of 16, said that, even as a teenager, Diana was smitten with Charles.

'Diana adored Prince Charles for years and years. She had

photos of him everywhere in her bedroom,' Penny revealed. 'Her dream was to actually come face-to-face with him.'

That moment would come in 1977, when Charles visited Althorp, the Spencer family estate, and bumped into Diana, who was 16 at the time. 'I remember her coming to school after a weekend out and saying, "I've met him! I've met him at last,"' Penny continued. 'He'd spoken to her and her dream had come true.'

However, Charles was dating Diana's older sister Sarah at the time, and nothing would develop between him and Diana until their second meeting in 1980, when he was single again.

The prince noticed Diana during a country weekend when she was watching him play polo. Things progressed quickly from there, and Diana was invited to spend time with Charles at Balmoral, the royal family's sprawling estate in

Scotland. Aged just 19 at the time, Diana was thrust into the public eye, and the media immediately went wild with the thought that the Lothario prince had finally found 'The One', and would continue the Windsor dynasty.

Following her getaway with Charles, paparazzi swarmed Diana, who shyly told reporters, 'I've had a lovely weekend.'

The pair began courting in earnest and, after just 12 dates, Charles proposed. An official announcement was made on 24 February 1981, with Diana flashing a large engagement ring by the then Crown Jeweller, Garrard. The band featured a stunning 12-carat blue Ceylon sapphire, surrounded by 14 diamonds. In fact, Charles had proposed to Diana three weeks previously, shortly before she departed for a trip to Australia without him.

On Diana's return, the young couple gave an engagement

'I've met him at last!'



Enjoying a family vacation on the island of Tresco in 1989

interview to the press. 'I asked Diana before she went to Australia, two to three days before, because I thought, apart from anything else, that if she went to Australia she could then think about it,' Charles revealed. 'If she didn't like the idea then she could say she didn't... but, in fact, you actually said...' Diana interjected, "Yes"... quite promptly!

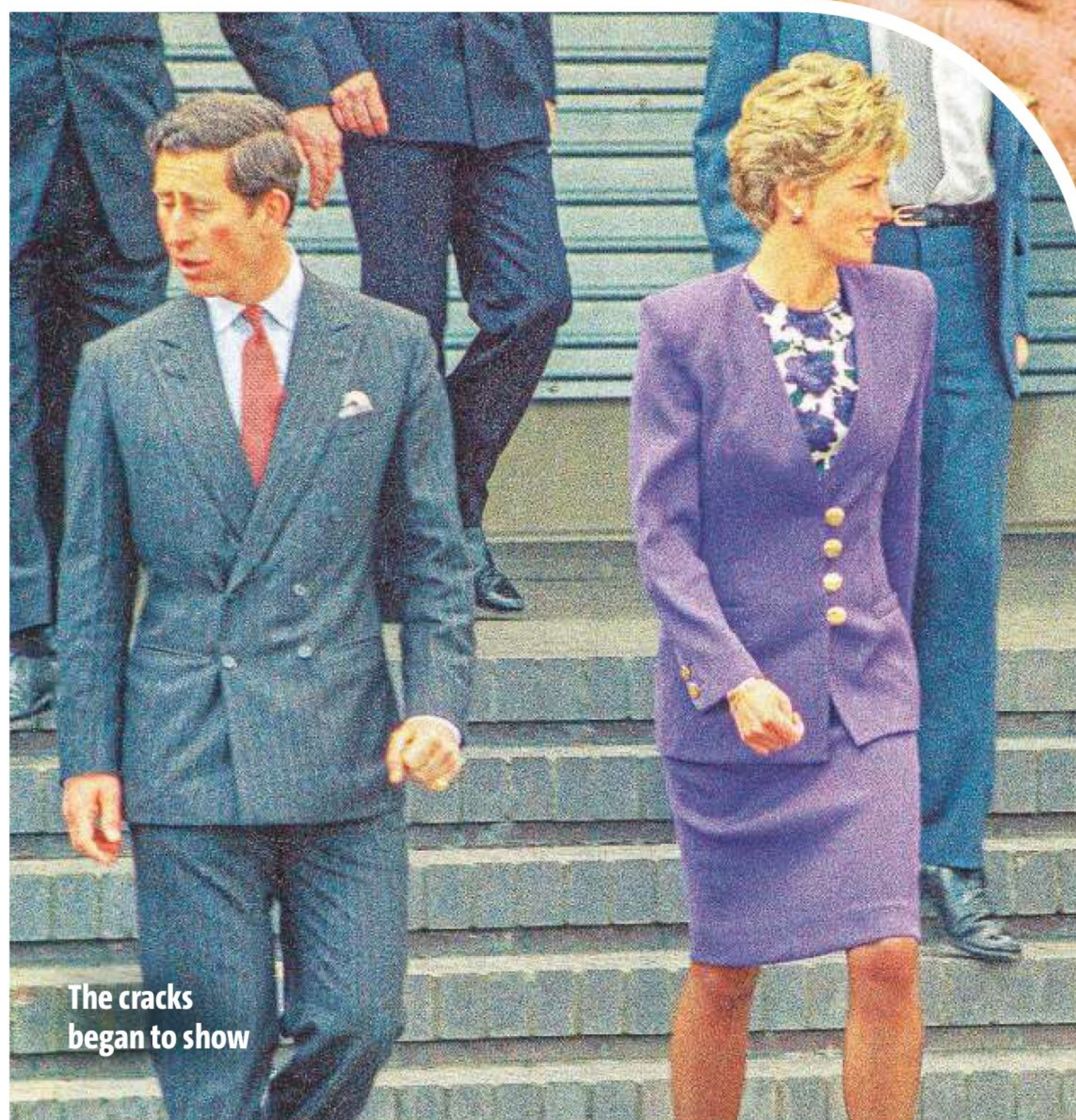
However, some commentators thought that Charles had reservations, even at this early stage. When asked by a reporter if they were in love, Diana responded with, 'Of course!' Yet Charles appeared slightly more hesitant, answering, 'Whatever "in love" means... It's your own interpretation.'

In the years since, this moment has been repeatedly replayed, and even recreated in a series of *The*

Crown. During that same interview, the couple were quizzed about their first meeting. Diana suggested she was instantly smitten with Charles, revealing that her immediate impression of him was 'pretty amazing'. Meanwhile, Charles painted a slightly different picture of the encounter, saying that, while he found her 'jolly, amusing and attractive', their romance was 'a gradual business'.

The couple's engagement was a turning point for Diana – her life would never be the same again. She left her job at a nursery school, admitting that she'd miss the children she'd worked with. She also moved out of her flat-share in London and into Clarence House with the Queen Mother, before moving into Buckingham Palace before the wedding.

The big day would come on



The cracks began to show



Looking unhappy in Australia in 1988

A misplaced kiss in India in 1992

29 July 1981, just 11 months after they started dating, with the service held at St Paul's cathedral in London. A global TV audience of 750 million tuned in, with 600,000 spectators lining the streets in the hope of catching a glimpse of the prince and his bride.

It looked like the perfect day. Diana was a vision in a silk taffeta

and lace gown, complete with a traditional veil and incredible 25-foot train. But already trouble was brewing under the surface. Sitting in the congregation at the wedding was Charles's close friend and first true love, Camilla Parker Bowles – the woman he couldn't get out of his mind, and the one he'd have an affair with while

married to Diana. Intimate tapes later revealed Diana's state of mind as she walked down the aisle. 'I was feeling deathly calm, deathly calm,' she said on the recordings. 'I felt like a lamb to the slaughter and I knew it and I knew I couldn't do anything about it.' She added, 'My wedding day, I think that was the worst

day of my life. If I could write my own script I would have my husband go away with his woman and never come back.'

In a biography of Charles, author Sally Bedell Smith claims that the prince also had his reservations. She wrote that Charles felt 'bullied' into marrying by his father Prince Philip, and cried tears over Camilla on their wedding day. He's said to have hoped that Diana was someone he could 'learn to love'. It turned out to never be the case.

'The 12-year gap between Charles and Diana was essentially unbridgeable. They had no intellectual connections, few mutual friends, no interests in common, and none of the shared life experiences he would have had with a contemporary,' she wrote. 'Although Camilla had the same limited upper-class education, she was on Charles's wavelength – absorbed as he was by hunting and other country pursuits, at home in the same social circle – in a way Diana could never be.' While Charles was clearly in love with Camilla, he'd allegedly been warned that she wasn't 'suitable' as a bride, and she'd gone on to marry Andrew Parker Bowles.

Of course, Diana and Charles did share some happy times, such as the births of their sons, William and Harry in 1982 and 1984. Her biographer Andrew Morton said, 'When she was pregnant with Harry in the summer of 1984, she and Charles had a wonderful summer in Balmoral. He was



**On tour in the
United States in 1985**

writing love letters to her and they were happy.' But it wouldn't last – Charles simply couldn't forget Camilla.

By 1986, five years into his marriage with Diana, Charles rekindled his relationship with Camilla, who was still married.

Diana is said to have become jealous and, on secretly recorded tapes, she could be heard recalling a time when she confronted Camilla about her suspicions.

In the recordings, Diana

revealed, 'I said, "I know what's going on between you and Charles and I just want you to know that."' She claimed that Camilla responded with, 'You've got everything you ever wanted. All the men in the world fall in love with you and you've got two beautiful children. What more do you want?' Diana continued, 'So I said, "I want my husband." And

**'I know
what's
going on'**

I said to Camilla, "I'm sorry I'm in the way... and it must be hell for both of you. But I do know what's going on. Don't treat me like an idiot."'

Diana's suspicions were confirmed in 1992, when a taped phone call between Charles and

Camilla was leaked to the press, exposing the affair. In December that year, the Prime Minister,



**1995: the family
with William on his
first day at Eton**

John Major, announced in the House of Commons that Charles and Diana had separated. However, they didn't divorce straight away. In an interview with Jonathan Dimbleby in 1994, Charles admitted to being unfaithful to Diana, but claimed it was only after their marriage had 'irretrievably broken down'.

Meanwhile, Diana had also strayed. The princess admitted having an affair with former Cavalry officer James Hewitt and allegedly had another with gin heir James Gilbey.

Diana later said she felt 'deep, deep, profound sadness' over the breakdown of her marriage. 'We'd struggled to keep it going, but obviously we'd both run out of steam,' she recalled, adding, 'In a way, I suppose it could have been a relief for us both that we'd finally made our minds up.'

As a result of her upbringing, however, a divorce was difficult for



the running of her private office. Although she was still Princess of Wales, she was no longer to be known as Her Royal Highness, which is believed to have upset her. From here, Diana and Charles would officially begin their separate lives – a process that had begun in private long before.

Camilla, who had ended her marriage to Andrew in 1995, and Charles continued their relationship, growing closer than ever. They would marry in 2005. Meanwhile, Diana moved on with Hasnat Khan, a Pakistani heart surgeon who she described as 'Mr Wonderful'.

However, it wasn't to last and Diana ended their relationship in the early summer of 1997. Her romance with Dodi Fayed followed, the man who would tragically die alongside her in a car crash on 31 August 1997.

While Diana learnt to love after Charles, there is no doubt that the end of their marriage left her brokenhearted. 'I desperately wanted it to work, I desperately loved my husband and I wanted to share everything together, and I thought that we were a very good team,' she said. But for Charles and Diana, it was not meant to be.

Diana. 'I think, like any marriage, especially when you've had divorced parents like myself, you'd want to try even harder to make it work, and you don't want to fall back into a pattern that you've seen happen in your family,' Diana said.

But in 1995, the Queen wrote to the couple, urging them to divorce, and proceedings were finalised on 28 August 1996. 'The Princess of Wales has agreed to Prince Charles's request for a divorce,' the official announcement said. 'The Princess will continue to be involved in all decisions relating to the children and will remain at Kensington Palace with offices in St James's Palace. The Princess of Wales will retain the title and be known as Diana, Princess of Wales.'

Upon finalising their divorce, Diana received a lump sum, believed to be £17 million, and a further £400,000 per year for



At the State Opening of Parliament in 1991

Diana was so
EMBARRASSED'

After a personal call to an old friend was made public, the Princess was horrified

It was New Year's Eve 1989. Princess Diana sat alone in her bedroom pouring her heart out on the phone to her childhood friend and former beau James Gilbey. He listened sympathetically as she confessed

that her husband Charles made her life 'torture'. 'And so, darling, what other lows today?' he then asked. 'I was bad at lunch and nearly started blubbing,' she replied. 'I felt sad and empty.'

Their intimate conversation lasts around 20 minutes, during which Gilbey frequently calls Diana 'darling', uses her nickname 'Squidgy' 14 times and tells her he loves her. The pair can also be heard making kissing sounds

while Gilbey, known to be a fun-loving character who always put Diana at ease when they met, talks about wrapping his arms around her and holding her close. Diana tells him he makes her go 'all jellybags' and refers to Prince Charles derisively as 'His Nibs'.

It was clearly a lonely New Year's Eve for Princess Diana, which she was spending in Sandringham, Norfolk. While Gilbey, talking on his mobile phone, was about to head off to a lively dinner party, Diana was

contemplating another night in. On the tape she can be heard telling a member of staff what she'd like for dinner. 'Just some salad with yogurt. Like when I was ill in bed. That would be wonderful – about eight o'clock.' It certainly sounds like a sad way for a 28-year-old woman – blessed with beauty and wealth – to be celebrating the New Year.

As they continue to talk – the conversation also includes general chit-chat about everything from *EastEnders* to Diana's fear of becoming pregnant and the 'strange looks' she receives from the Queen Mother – Diana and Gilbey obviously assume everything they say is private.

But it wasn't. For a 70-year-old retired bank manager was listening in. The unlikely eavesdropper named Cyril Reenan was an amateur radio enthusiast from Oxfordshire, who recorded

the conversation accidentally in his home studio. 'I didn't know what to do with it once I'd got it,' he reportedly said.

However, he soon seemed to have thought of something, because on 8 January 1990 Reenan contacted *The Sun* newspaper. Journalists were

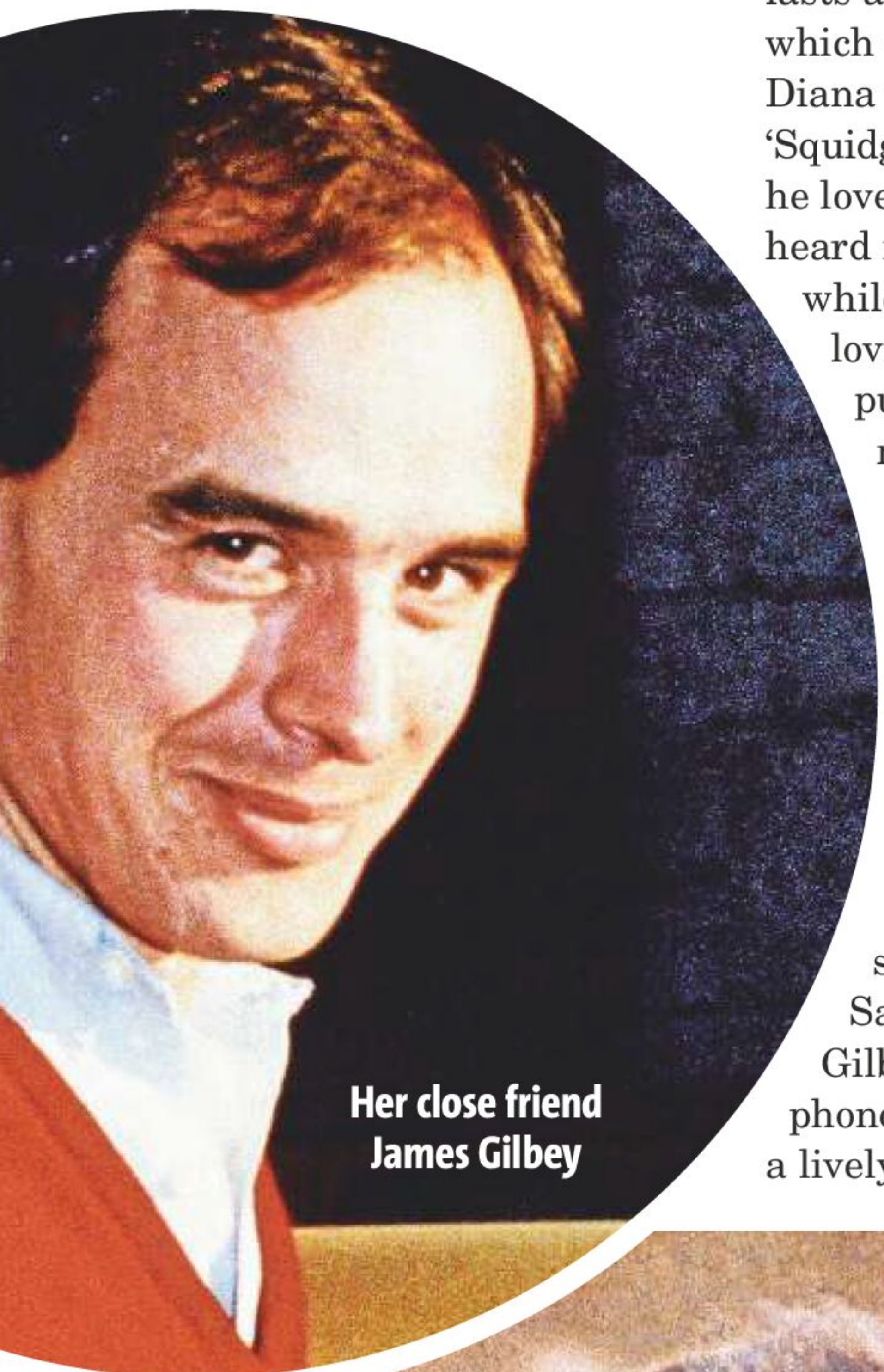
sent to his home to listen to the tapes. 'We put the cassette in and listened to it, almost mesmerised,' the paper's royal correspondent

admitted. *The Sun* decided not to publish them however, but they did tell James Gilbey who apparently 'went completely white' and told Princess Diana.

From that day on, the pair must have lived in fear that someone somewhere might eventually reveal the contents of that private conversation.

And bizarrely, Cyril Reenan wasn't the only eavesdropper.

'You make me go all jellybags'

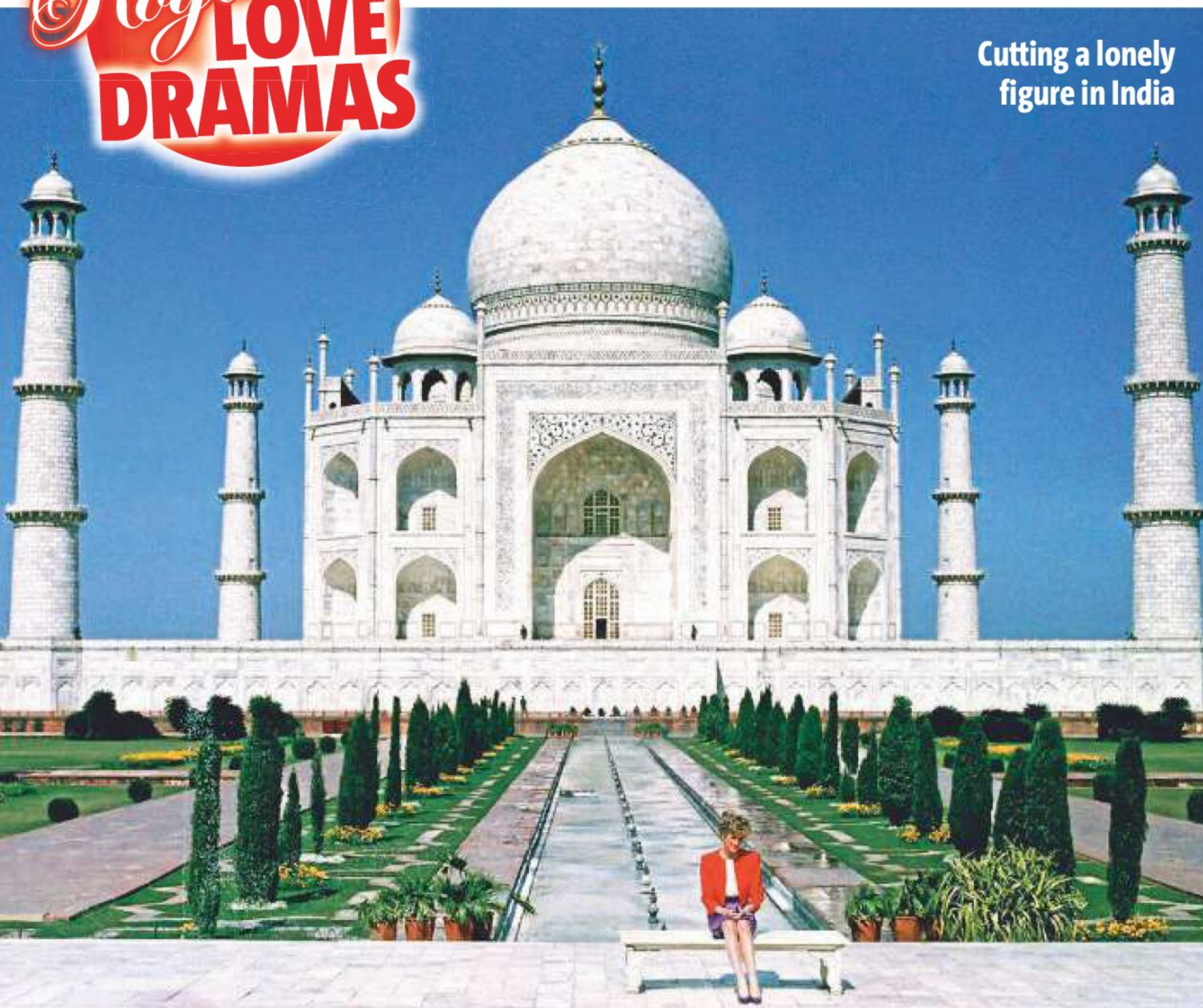


Her close friend
James Gilbey



Their body language said it all on a tour of Korea in 1992

Cutting a lonely figure in India



A 25-year-old typist called Jane Norgrove, who lived just a few short miles away from Reenan in Oxfordshire, had also recorded the conversation and sent it to a newspaper. 'It was just me recording a telephone conversation in my bedroom,' she later said. 'I didn't even listen to it, I just put the tape in a drawer. I didn't play it until weeks later.'

Incredibly, further rumours suggested there may have been another two eavesdroppers...

Finally, in August 1992 – more than two years after the original conversation took place – the day Diana and Gilbey must have absolutely dreaded arrived. The secret tapes were made public, first by the *National Enquirer* in the US (though who sent them a recording still remains unknown) and then by *The Sun* the following day.

On 24 August Princess Diana, who was staying at Balmoral with the rest of the royal family on their annual summer holiday, woke up to find herself front page news. *The Sun* published the entire transcript of her chat with Gilbey and even set up a special premium rate phone line so that people could listen themselves to the whole 20-minute conversation.

Sources say Diana was

'shattered' and hugely embarrassed, though her then bodyguard Ken Wharfe later claimed she had called the premium rate phone line to listen to the conversation herself.

It had already been an eventful few months for the princess.

The publication of *Diana: Her True Story* by Andrew Morton on 19 June had caused a huge outcry. The explosive biography shattered the fairy-tale image

of Charles and Diana's marriage, containing allegations that seemed outlandish to many. Revelations that Princess Diana was depressed, suffered from bulimia, had self-harmed and threatened suicide on a number

'She thought her phone was tapped'



Andrew Morton published his book in 1992





On the school-run
with William



Shortly after
*Diana: Her True
Story* was released

of occasions, sounded decidedly far-fetched. But now, three months later, the public could listen themselves to her talking about her lonely, unhappy life and conclude that, perhaps, there was some truth in Morton's book after all.

Of course, the intimate conversation also seemed to suggest that Diana was having an affair with Gilbey, something he has always denied. If they had been romantically involved however, sources believe the relationship ended abruptly with the revelations of the so-called

Squidgygate tapes.

'Diana was more concerned purely from an embarrassment point of view that this was in the public domain,' Ken Wharfe later revealed. The Queen was also said to be 'unhappy' about the tape and ordered an inquiry by MI5 to find out how it had happened in the first place.

Whether the recordings were simply the work of amateur radio hams who stumbled on something remarkable, or were deliberately put into the public domain by people who knew exactly what they were doing – such as the secret service – remains unclear.

While the secret service has always denied it leaked the conversation to embarrass Diana, not everyone believed them. Ken Wharfe always maintained the whole debacle was the result of phone bugging by British intelligence. And so, it seems, did Diana herself. Biographer Andrew

Morton describes how she even began to make 'bitter' jokes about her situation. 'When Diana talked on the phone – which was often – midway through a conversation she would suddenly say, "Hello boys, time to change the tape,"' he wrote in his 2011 book *William & Catherine*.

'The princess believed not only that the Palace was conspiring against her, but that the security forces were routinely tapping her telephones.'

James Gilbey, meanwhile, has always remained tight-lipped about the entire incident, perhaps out of loyalty to Diana.

He also remained resolutely single until 2014 when, at the age of 57, he married for the first time. Friends said that marriage and 'settling down' was not in his vocabulary until he met mother-of-five Lavinia Hadsley-Chaplin. Lavinia, they agreed, seemed to have 'won him round'.

Diana pictured alone
on a visit to Egypt

Diana's love



James Hewitt

When still married to Charles, five years into their life together in 1986, Diana began an affair with Army officer James Hewitt. It was at around the same time her husband reignited his relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles. Although neither Diana nor James confirmed their five-year romance until years later, many people knew of their affair and, in 1989, Diana couldn't stop blushing as she handed him a trophy at a polo tournament.

Her former police protection officer and

confidante Ken Wharfe later said that the pair hadn't been very subtle. In his book, *Diana: Closely Guarded Secret*, he wrote, 'Hewitt, a natural womaniser, gave her the attention she relished, and then the passion she yearned for. At first, Diana refused to concede to me that her affair was anything less than innocent. "Nothing is going on," she would say, her face flushing red, as we drove back from a tryst.'

He added, 'I would assure her that I had no interest in anything but her safety, but she must have thought I was stupid or deaf. The pair usually met at an old cottage in Devon

belonging to Shirley, Hewitt's mother, where the creaking bedroom floorboards told the story more loudly than any confession.'

But they were forced apart when James was deployed to serve in the Gulf War, and the pair split permanently when their infidelity became exposed. He then collaborated on the book *Princess In Love*, giving details of the affair, while Diana confirmed their relationship during her *Panorama* interview in 1995. In 2021, a whole song about James, now 66, was written for *Diana: The Musical*, a parody of her life which was released to largely poor reviews.

affairs



Will Carling

Diana met former England rugby captain Will, now 59, at an upmarket London gym in 1995 and they were close for a short period. Her friend Simone Simmons later said, 'Diana was worried she was looking too skinny and bony across the shoulders. Will went to the Palace to give her

personal training... He was smuggled in the back of her car under a blanket from the gym.'

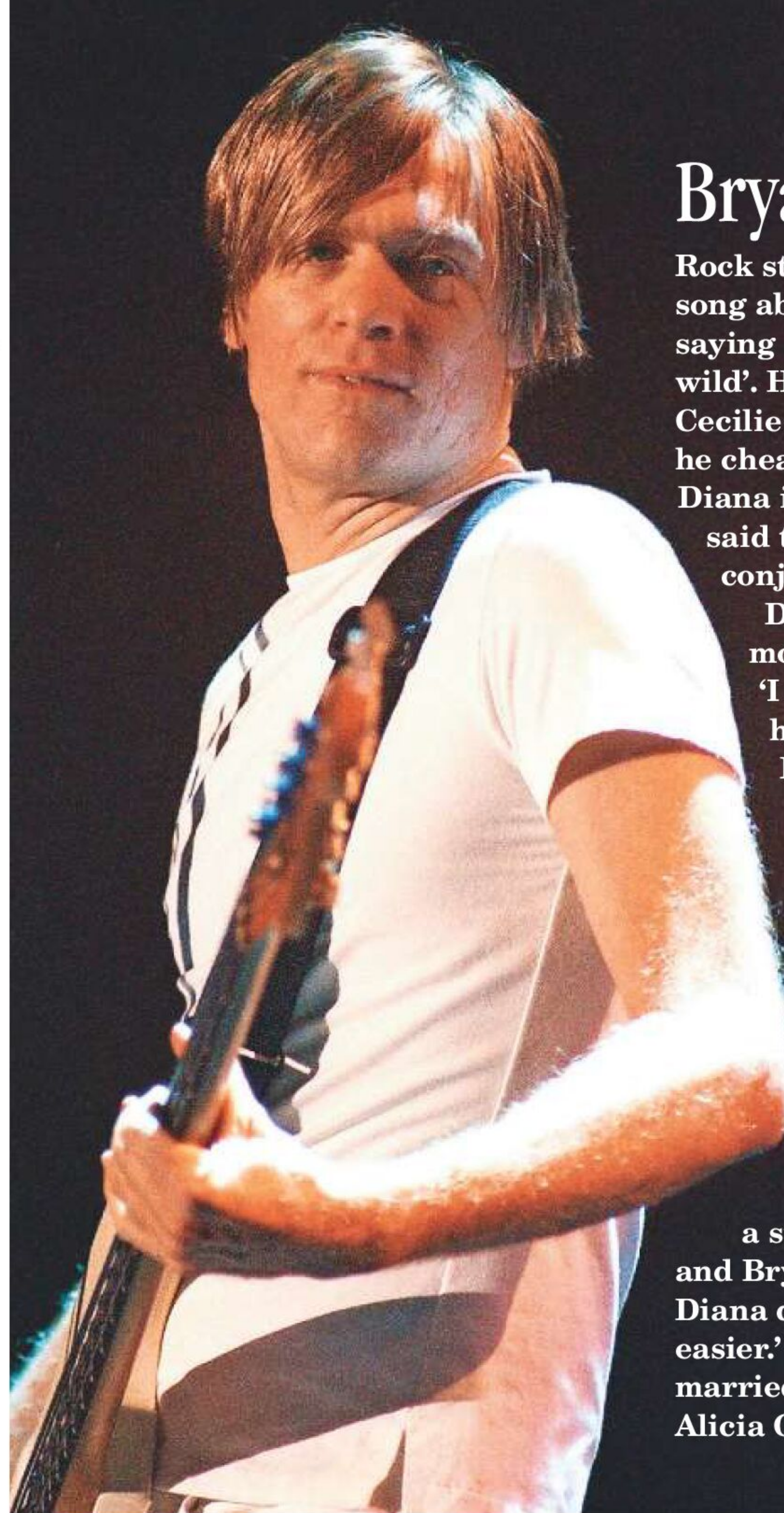
Will allegedly admitted to falling in love with Diana, but says they were just friends. His marriage fell apart afterwards, but he married Lisa Cooke in 1999.

Hasnat Khan

Diana fell 'madly in love' with heart surgeon Hasnat after meeting him at London's Royal Brompton Hospital in 1995. They dated quietly for two years before ending it months before her death in 1997. Friends say she loved the normality of his life and spending time at his small flat. Hasnat, now 66 and still a surgeon, has rarely spoken publicly about Diana, but he did reveal that he took the princess to meet his family during her 1996 visit to Pakistan,



which 'she really enjoyed'. He has largely stayed out of the public eye since her death.



Bryan Adams

Rock star Bryan wrote a song about the princess, saying she 'drove him wild'. His ex-girlfriend Cecilie Thomsen reckoned he cheated on her with Diana in 1996, but Bryan said the claim was 'pure conjecture'.

Danish actress and model Cecilie alleged, 'I knew Diana had an affair with Bryan. Bryan knew Paul Burrell very well and Paul was part of the inner circle around Bryan, and he also introduced him to Diana. The first time Bryan met Diana, I wasn't invited. Ours was a stormy relationship and Bryan's affair with Diana didn't make it easier.' Now 65, he married British actress Alicia Grimaldi in 2009.

Paul Burrell

They were never romantically involved, but her butler Paul Burrell was an important man in Diana's life. She called him her 'rock' and, according to Paul, 'the only man she had ever trusted'. He began working for Charles and Diana in 1987 and stayed in her service until her death.

Although he was very close to Diana and her two sons, Paul has previously claimed he hadn't seen William or Harry since 1997. 'The whole establishment is up against me because I'm the outsider,' he said.

Just before the 20th anniversary of Diana's passing, Paul, now 66, revealed he'd split from his wife Maria before marrying his boyfriend Graham Cooper. Speaking about Paul's sexuality, a friend said, 'He did share it with Diana while he worked with her because they were so close. But at the time



she was the only woman he felt he could tell.'

Paul's become an outspoken critic of Prince Harry and wife Meghan Markle in recent years.

Charles & Camilla's
secret late-night calls
were exposed to
the world

Charles's
infidelity
was revealed

'They sho NEVER ha been hea

Camilla
faced public
backlash
following
the release
of the tapes

On 18 December 1989 Princes Charles made a six-minute phone call that came close to ruining not only his reputation but his chance of ever becoming King. The late-night chat between the prince and his long-time 'friend' Mrs Camilla Parker Bowles

included some excruciatingly intimate details. It was a very raunchy conversation between two adults who were clearly far more than just good friends.

Charles told Camilla, 'I want to feel my way along you, all over you and up and down you, and in and out,' while Camilla

gushes, 'Oh, Charles.' Charles then admits, 'I need you several times a week,' and Camilla replies, 'I need you all the time. All the time.' Charles even talks about wanting to be Camilla's tampon. He's heard saying, 'Oh God, I'll just live inside your trousers or something. It would be much easier.'



Diana was said to be 'triumphant' when Charles's secret was out

'But unfortunately, it was.'

Exactly who was listening in and who recorded the flirtatious chat – which took place just a couple of weeks before 'Squidgygate' – is still a subject of much debate.

Some sources maintain it was simply a member of the public, others suggest it was a journalist or even the secret service.

But whoever the culprit, the tape was eventually leaked to the press, and on 17 January 1993 – a month after Diana and Charles formally separated – the *Sunday Mirror* published the whole toe-curling transcript. It quickly became known as 'Camillagate' or even worse – 'Tampongate'.

The recording caused shock and outrage. At the time, it seemed as if Charles and Camilla would never be able to withstand the level of criticism and abuse they received. Their reputations were severely tarnished. Some even questioned whether Charles was fit to become King.

After all, Charles and Camilla were both married when the conversation occurred – Camilla had been wed to Andrew Parker Bowles for 15 years while Charles and Diana's marriage was then in its eighth year – and both seemed to be flagrantly committing adultery. Camilla found herself the butt of many lewd jokes, while cartoonists made fun of Charles, even featuring him talking dirty to his plants.

However, one person at least was rather chuffed by it all. Having suffered enormous embarrassment herself a few months earlier after her own personal phone call was exposed in the press, Princess Diana was apparently left feeling 'triumphant' that her husband's secret affair had finally been exposed to the world.

For Diana, it was public vindication of something she'd known about for a long time. Over the years her suspicions about Charles and Camilla had

been dismissed by others who accused her of being paranoid. She regularly quizzed her husband's aides about their relationship, referring to Camilla as 'The Rottweiler'. Now, at last, the proof of her husband's infidelity was out in the open.

Diana's former bodyguard Ken Wharfe wrote in his book *Guarding Diana: Protecting The Princess Around The World* that the recording gave her a much-needed boost.

He quotes Diana as saying on the day the story broke, 'Game, set and match,' as she clutched a copy of the newspaper containing the transcript of the call.

'Later, however, she told me that she had been genuinely shocked by some of the baser comments, particularly the prince's tampon reference,' Wharfe writes. "It's just sick," she kept on saying.'

'She was genuinely shocked'

Camilla found her life turned upside down. Accused of being a 'marriage wrecker' and 'the most hated woman in Britain' the public backlash was severe – women even threw bread rolls at her in supermarkets. She didn't respond. In fact, she said nothing

at all and tried to keep a dignified silence about her relationship with Charles.

'She has a wonderful instinct for self-preservation, a tendency to put

her head in the sand and not think about things that are too difficult,' says royal author Penny Junor. Instead of playing the victim, Camilla managed to 'internalise the pain and present a brave face'.

Nevertheless, the fallout continued. The following year, Charles gave a televised interview to David Dimbleby

**ould
ave
rd'**

'What are you going to turn into, a pair of knickers?' Camilla replies. The pair then joke about him being a box of tampons and express their undying love for each other over and over again.

'It was the sort of late-night chat that should never be overheard,' says royal author Penny Junor.

Camilla and Diana both went to watch Charles ride at Ludlow Racecourse in 1980





Diana pours her heart out on *Panorama* in 1995

in which he was asked if he had been 'faithful and honourable' during his marriage to Diana. Looking very uncomfortable, the prince replied, 'Yes, absolutely.' When Dimbleby pushed further and asked, 'And were you?' Charles said, 'Yes, until it became irretrievably broken down, us both having tried.'

In 1995 there were further ramifications when Camilla and Andrew Parker Bowles divorced and Princess Diana gave her infamous *Panorama* interview in which she declared, 'Well, there were three of us in this marriage so it was a bit crowded.'

It also later emerged that Princess Diana might have listened in to one of her husband's

late-night telephone conversations with Camilla. Her intimate thoughts were reportedly recorded in 1997, months before her death, by a BBC cameraman the princess had hired herself.

'She described how she came to listen to their phone calls,' the cameraman later said. 'In one, Charles was sitting on the toilet seat when she caught him.'

Questions about the tapes continued for years – long after Diana's tragic death in 1997. In 2008, minutes from a security meeting describing the inquiry into the scandal were read to the

London hearing into her death and that of Dodi Fayed.

'Evidence had been found that the fixed telephone lines had been tampered with,' the

Queen's private secretary Lord Fellowes told the inquiry. And although the recording was undeniably genuine, most experts now believe it wasn't

simply one single conversation – the recording included bits of several, conducted on different nights and spliced together.

Yet despite the lewd nature of the whole Camillagate scandal, the six-minute chat also revealed

'He was tender and loving'

something else. During the conversation Camilla spent most of the time boosting Charles's confidence 'showing an interest in his work and making him feel good about himself, which no one else did', says Penny Junor. 'And he, in turn, was tender and loving and passionate, telling her how proud he was of her, and how her great achievement had been to love him. What the tape proved beyond doubt was that they had a proper, loving, supportive and happy relationship – the sort they both lacked in their marriages.'

In the very difficult years that followed, the pair quietly continued their relationship away from the spotlight. Then, in 2003, Camilla

Camilla with her first husband Andrew



moved into Clarence House to live with Charles and their engagement was announced two years later – on 10 February 2005.

On 9 April 2005, a massive 35 years after they'd first met, Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles finally tied the knot in a private civil ceremony at Windsor Guildhall.

The King and Queen have now been happily married for nearly 18 years, still look relaxed and content in each other's company and seem to have finally put the terrible scandal behind them.



Fergie's SHAME

The 'toegate' photos that caused shock and outrage

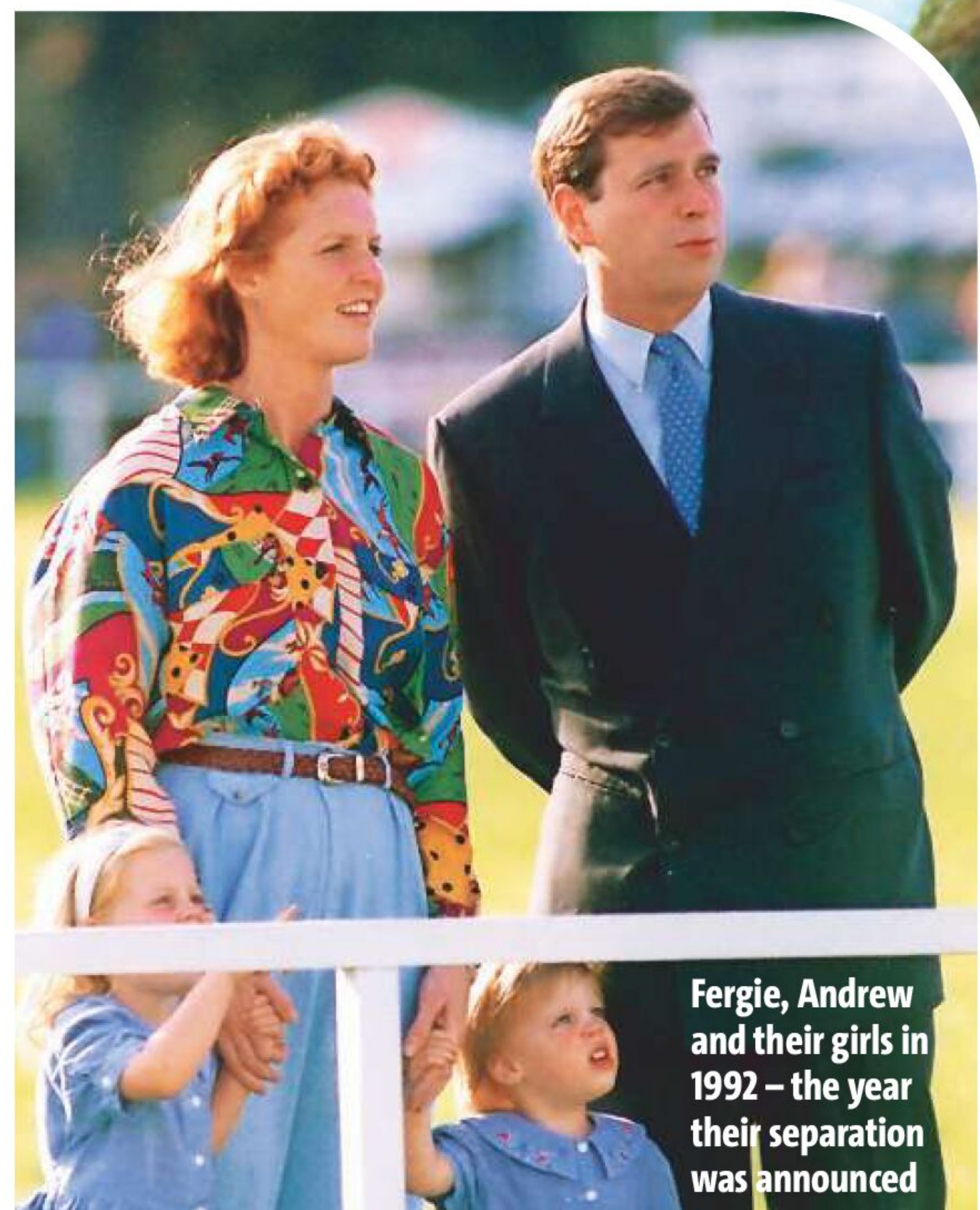
The Queen was enjoying her annual summer holiday at Balmoral when, on Thursday 20 August 1992, she came down to breakfast and received a rather nasty surprise. For on the front page of one of her daily newspapers were some extremely intimate holiday photos of her daughter-in-law Sarah, the Duchess of York, who was currently a guest at the castle along with her young daughters and other members of the royal family.

The grainy photos in the *Daily Mirror* had been taken a few weeks before. They show a loved-up couple lazing by a pool in a luxury St Tropez villa in the south of France. The woman is sunbathing topless while the man can be seen bending down sucking her toes. In one picture, a two-year-old child looks on as the couple kiss.

The woman in question was Her Royal Highness the Duchess of York and the man she can be seen frolicking with was not her husband Prince Andrew, but her Texan 'financial advisor' John Bryan. And the child was Princess Eugenie.

The intimate pictures (shot by paparazzi on a telephoto lens) were definitely not what anyone would want their extended family to see, especially if one of them happens to be the Queen.

'It would be accurate to report that the porridge was getting cold,' the duchess wrote later in her autobiography *My Story: Sarah,*



Fergie, Andrew and their girls in 1992 – the year their separation was announced

Duchess of York. 'Eyes wide and mouths ajar, the adults were flipping through the *Daily Mirror*.'

'The family came down to breakfast and there was Fergie in this shocking scene and that was the end,' says royal biographer Penny Juror.

'The Queen was furious, absolutely furious,' says royal biographer Ingrid Seward. 'I think partly because she loved Fergie so much. She just couldn't believe Fergie could have been so stupid to allow this to happen.'

The Queen's private secretary reportedly told the duchess it might be best if she went immediately. As she hurriedly packed her bags and left Balmoral Castle – driving 50 miles to Aberdeen airport with Eugenie, then two, and Beatrice, four, and their nanny – Sarah Ferguson must have realised it wasn't only the Queen's reaction she had to worry about, it was the rest of the world's too. For within a few hours, millions of people had also seen the 32-year-old duchess's holiday

antics, which quickly became known as 'toegate'.

When she finally arrived back at her Surrey house that fateful August day, there was more embarrassment, for nobody was there to open the gates. Instead of driving straight past the photographers and reporters outside, she was forced to sit and wait while a detective unlocked the barrier.

There was also a degree of public sympathy for the duchess; after all this was a private holiday





John Bryan claims he was never “sucking” her toes

The Queen was said to be furious when she saw the photos



family. ‘It really was the first time that the royal family was opened up to such ridicule,’ said *People* magazine journalist Anne-Marie O’Neill. ‘I mean, sucking toes. It’s not like it was pornographic. It was just so undignified.’

Bryan himself however, a Texan oil tycoon, has always denied the toe-sucking allegations. ‘God dammit, I wasn’t sucking her toes,’ he reportedly said when he first saw the photos. ‘I was kissing them!’

Friend Allan Starkie later confirmed this. ‘He [Bryan] confided in me a number of times that he was actually licking her instep.

The upward thrust of his tongue at one point did perhaps touch her big toe – but hardly pure toe-sucking in the real sense of the word.’

The duchess herself later gave a different explanation. ‘He was pretending to try the slipper on my foot and I was Cinderella... and I said, ‘Oh, ha, ha, it doesn’t fit because you are not the prince.’

News of the scandal had begun to emerge the night before and one of the first people to find out about it seems to have been Princess Diana, who sent royal correspondent Richard Kay a pager message saying, ‘The redhead’s in trouble.’

Kay was then contacted by John Bryan – who he knew

well – asking if he could obtain an early copy of the *Daily Mirror* so he could see what was being said. Kay went straight to Bryan’s flat with a copy of the paper just as he received a call from a very worried duchess.

‘The phone inside was ringing as he buzzed me into the mansion block,’ Kay later wrote. ‘An unfinished takeaway meal was pushed to one side as Bryan thumbed through the next day’s paper. ‘Oh my God,’ he muttered. ‘The guy must have been right there, in the goddamn garden.’

‘It was after midnight, but he hurried into the kitchen to answer another call. It was Fergie on her private line from Balmoral.

‘Ever the smooth talker, Bryan promised her everything would be fine, but I could see in his face that he didn’t really believe it.

‘In a few short hours, those pictures were going to be on the breakfast room sideboard in the Queen’s castle. They would also be winging around the world to be pored over by millions.’

The duchess was effectively banished from

‘the Firm’ from that day on, although she and Andrew didn’t actually divorce until four years later. In her 1996 book, Fergie explained that she thought ‘the pictures were a plant to discredit her’, although why and by whom she didn’t make clear.

Thirty-three years later the royal family has just about recovered from the incident. Andrew and Fergie, meanwhile, remain on friendly terms – with Fergie still supporting her former husband amid the Jeffrey Epstein scandal and Andrew’s resulting relegation to a non-working royal.

While she had been expected to spend Christmas 2024 with King Charles, a recent story involving Prince Andrew and an alleged Chinese spy meant she did not. However, Charles is thought to still be fond of her.

‘I was kissing them!’

Andrew and Fergie remain close



and she was already separated from Prince Andrew.

‘You don’t expect somebody to crawl through the bushes to take photographs of you topless while your financial advisor is sucking your toes,’ royal commentator Dickie Arbiter told ITV’s *The Royal Wives Of Windsor*. ‘But by the same token, you don’t go away with somebody that isn’t your husband and sunbathe topless.’

Nevertheless, the photos still caused deep embarrassment for Fergie and the rest of the royal

Date Night Dr

Theatre Visit

This outfit is the perfect alternative to a dress if you want to stand out from the crowd.

T-shirt, 6-24, Marks & Spencer, £9.50



Earrings, River Island, £14



Trousers, 6-18, River Island, £39



Coat, XS-XXL, H&M, £56



Shoes, Office, £45



Bag, Charles & Keith, £65



Kate,
Princess
of Wales

Dressed-Up Dinner

A wrap-detail dress cinches at the waist, effortlessly creating a flattering hourglass silhouette.

Dress, 6-20, Quiz, £44.99



Bracelet, Estella Bartlett, £45



Bag, Zara, £35.99



Shoes, New Look, £35.99



essing

Recreate these romantic royal looks for less with our pick of high-street swaps



Meghan,
Duchess
of Sussex

Romantic Getaway

For an exciting trip away with your date, opt for a shirt dress. Pair it with heels and dainty earrings for a chic, regal look.



Earrings,
Oliver
Bonas,
£26



Dress, 4-22, Boden, £98



Shoes,
Simmi, £32



Sophie,
Duchess of
Edinburgh



FM & DIGITAL
ACROSS THE UK



KEN BRUCE

IS IN THE HOUSE

Weekdays 10am-1pm

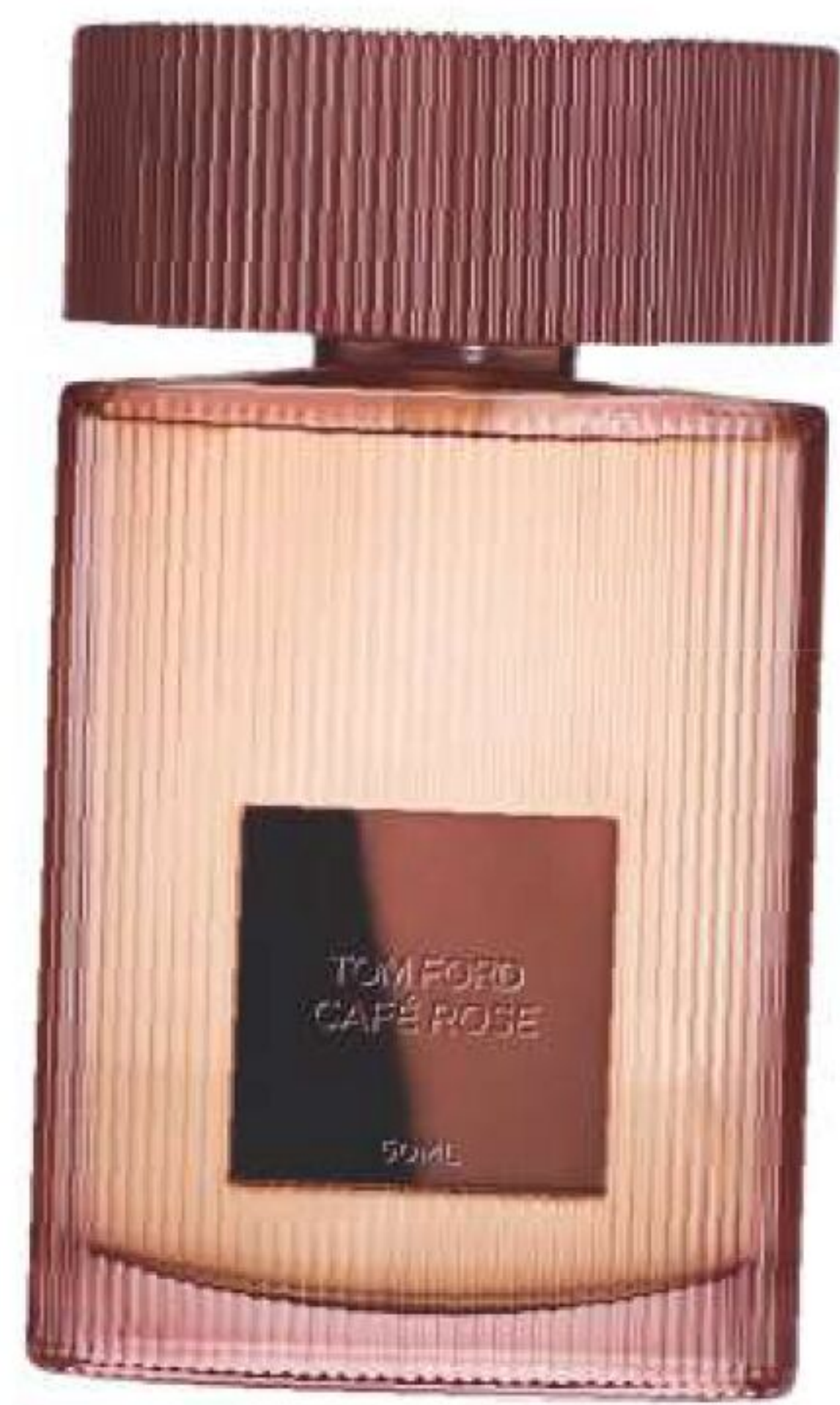


PLAYING THE BIGGEST SONGS
OF THE 70s 80s & 90s
WITH SIMON MAYO, JACKIE BRAMBLES
MARTIN KEMP, JENNY POWELL & KATE THORNTON

beauty secrets

Fresh favourite

This new playful twist on the beloved Perfect fragrance balances sweetness with a touch of floral elegance. With notes of almond milk, wild cherry and vanilla, it's a fun, fresh scent perfect for romantic evening plans. **Marc Jacobs Perfect Elixir**, from **£69** for 30ml at The Perfume Shop



Rich & intense

For a sultry, romantic vibe this Valentine's Day, Tom Ford Café Rose is a luxurious pick. Rich, with notes of Turkish rose, saffron and coffee, it's warm, intense and undeniably seductive. Perfect for a romantic evening or an indulgent self-care session. **Tom Ford Café Rose**, from **£108** for 50ml

Delicious aroma

For a sweet and playful aroma, Kayali Yum Boujee Marshmallow is a must-try. Featuring a mouth-watering medley of notes, such as marshmallow, vanilla and brown sugar, this gourmand fragrance is more like a decadent dessert. Perfect if you've got a sweet tooth. **Kayali Yum Boujee Marshmallow | 81 Eau De Parfum Intense**, from **£28** for 10ml



Floral affair

Chloé L'Eau de Parfum Intense is a fresh, romantic twist on the classic. With vibrant florals like rose and peony, balanced by a touch of amber, it's ideal for a day-to-night transition. Light yet luxurious, it's perfect for this spring, too. **Chloé L'Eau de Parfum Intense**, from **£75** for 30ml at The Perfume Shop



Princess treatment

This spritz is like bottled romance. Featuring Lily of the Valley – the same flower featured in Kate Middleton's wedding bouquet – along with fresh, green notes and delicate florals, it's an elegant fruity-floral fragrance fit for a princess. **Maison Margiela Replica Springtime In A Park**, from **£62** for 30ml



Bold glamour

If you love the original Libre, this reimagined version is sure to impress. It offers a fiery, floral blend of signature orange blossom, lavender and a surprising twist of coconut, palm tree and desert lily. Bold yet refined, this long-lasting fragrance is perfect for all-day wear. **Yves Saint Laurent Libre Flowers & Flames Eau de Parfum Florale**, from **£72** for 30ml



Love at first spritz

Sultry scents that spark instant chemistry

Sweet Temptation

Fresh pear, blooming rose, and a hint of jasmine make this scent feel light and flirty, but it's the warm, sweet amber and vanilla that give it that sultry, all-night appeal. The best part? The price tag is as irresistible as the scent itself. **Zara Red Temptation**, **£12.99** for 30ml



One of a kind

Rêve (French for 'dream') is a gourmand fragrance with buttercream, plum butter, toasted almond and florals. It's designed to smell slightly different on everyone. That means, even if your friend wore it on their last date, it won't smell the same on you. Unique! **Glossier You Rêve**, **£62** for 50ml

beauty secrets

Royally rom



Princess of Wales

Amp up the romance with a pretty-in-pink make-up look, inspired by Kate. The secret to her fresh-faced appearance is a generous amount of blusher swept across the apples of her cheeks. We love **Laura Mercier's Blush Colour Infusion Blusher in Strawberry, £31.50**, which blends flawlessly into skin for a healthy pop of colour. For the lips, the **Charlotte Tilbury K.I.S.S.I.N.G Lipstick in Red Carpet Pink, £28**, delivers a satin finish while keeping your pout hydrated. It also wouldn't be a glamorous Kate look without black eyeliner – **Zoeva's Velvet Love Eyeliner Pencil, £16**, has a highly pigmented, creamy formula that will stay in place all day. Lastly, to recreate the Princess' effortless tousled waves, use the **Beauty Works Professional Styler, £69.99**. After wrapping your hair segment by segment around the wand, gently comb through to loosen the curls.



romantic

Channel regal beauty on your next date night



Duchess of Sussex

We've never spotted a Meghan Markle make-up look where she isn't glowing. Recreate her bronzed complexion and slicked-back hairdo and you'll be guaranteed to wow on your dinner date. For sun-kissed radiance, apply the **Merit Bronze Balm, £32**, to the contours of your face. The creamy bronzer is super-easy to build and blend. To get Meghan's lush lashes, the **Maybelline Lash Sensational Sky High Mascara, £12.99**, coats each lash from root to tip for unbeatable volume. Last but not least, for her sleek hairdo, use the **Denman D91 Dress-Out Brush, £7**, to slick back your tresses. To keep the style in place, apply 1-2 pumps of the **Hair By Sam McKnight Self Control Gel, £22**, with your hands and brush again to smooth down. Finish with a quick spritz of your favourite hairspray to set everything in place.

Zara Tindall

Zara certainly knows how to bring the glamour to special occasions. Channel her sophistication this Valentine's Day with these easy tips and tricks. Start with a failsafe base, such as the **MAC Studio Radiance Serum Powered Foundation, £39** – it'll blur imperfections and create a flawless soft-focus finish. For eye-catching allure, bag yourself an eyeshadow palette that does it all. The **NARS Cosmetics Voyageur Eyeshadow Palette in Suede, £29.50**, features buttery matte shadows and glittery metallic hues that can be layered for a dynamic look. Zara perfects her pout with a high-shine gloss, like the **KIKO Milano 3D Hydra Lipgloss, £11.99**, which has a subtle pink shimmer. For her gorgeous locks, she opts for an up-do that we'd recommend securing with the **L'Oréal Paris Elnett Hairspray Anti-Brassiness, £5**. It offers long-lasting hold, while purple pigments help to boost brightness for blonde hair.



By Emma White Pictures: Getty, Alamy

home trends

Elegant FLORALS

Inky tones, bold blooms or dainty prints, these stunning buys are perfect for the winter season

Botanicals cushion,
Joe Browns, £25



Rose
framed
print,
Dunelm,
£15



Bespoke heritage magnificent
monochrome plates, Joe
Browns, £30 for four

Delicate
florals in a
monochrome
scheme add to the
moody tone



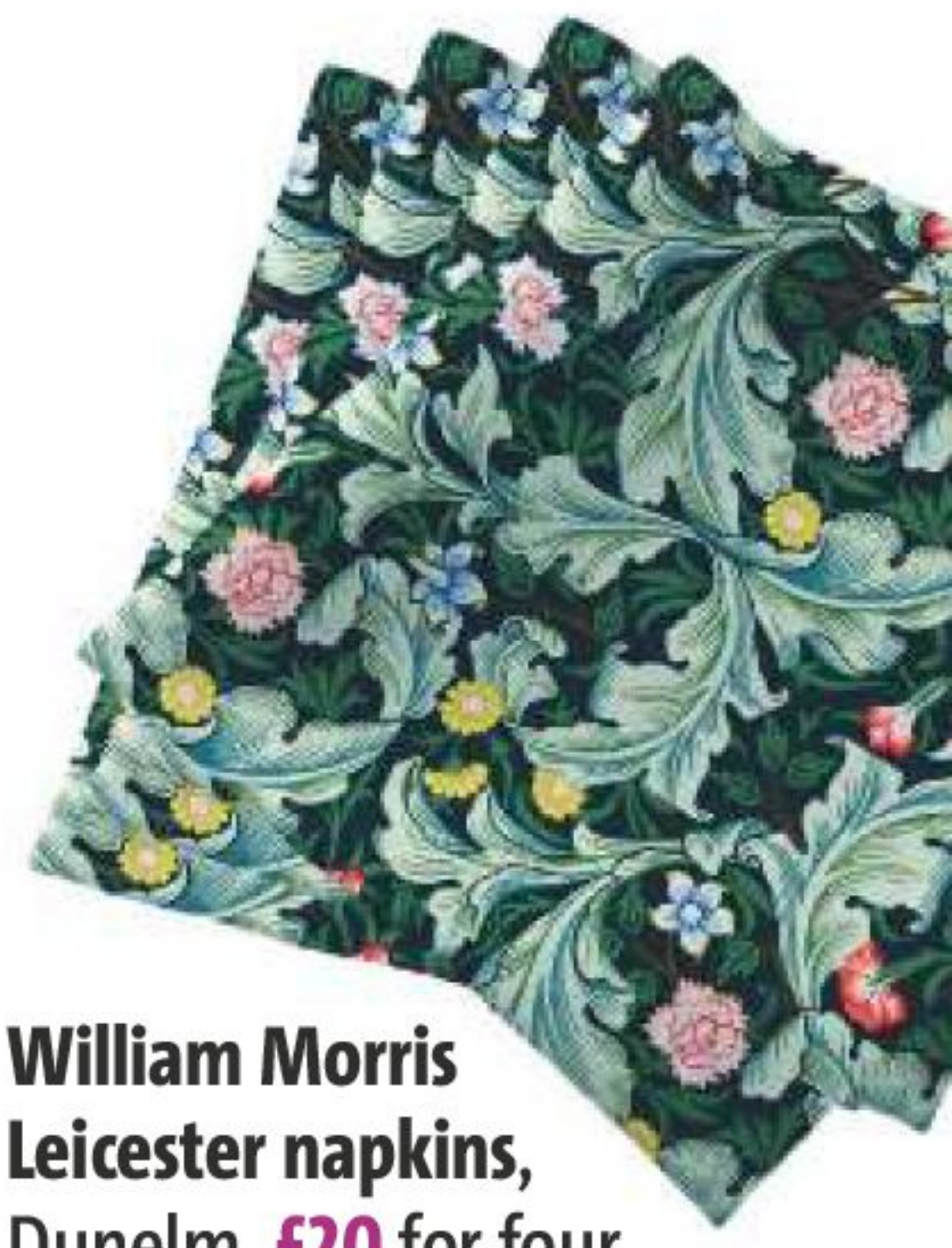
Fauvism duvet cover
and pillowcase set, from
£60; plum plush velvet
throw, £34; dark swirl
vase, £38 all Next Home



National
Gallery side
plates, Marks
& Spencer,
£25 for four



William Morris
Leicester napkins,
Dunelm, £20 for four



Rustic romance is the name of the game with this stylish bedding



Tibay upholstered floral chair, Wayfair, from **£189.99**



Jardin de Fleurs poster, Poster Store, **£15.95**



Vintage garden passion flowers shade, perkinsandmorley.com, **£49**



Leaves flower cushion, inkanddrop.com, **£32**



Strala peach coasters, abigailborg.com, **£16** for four

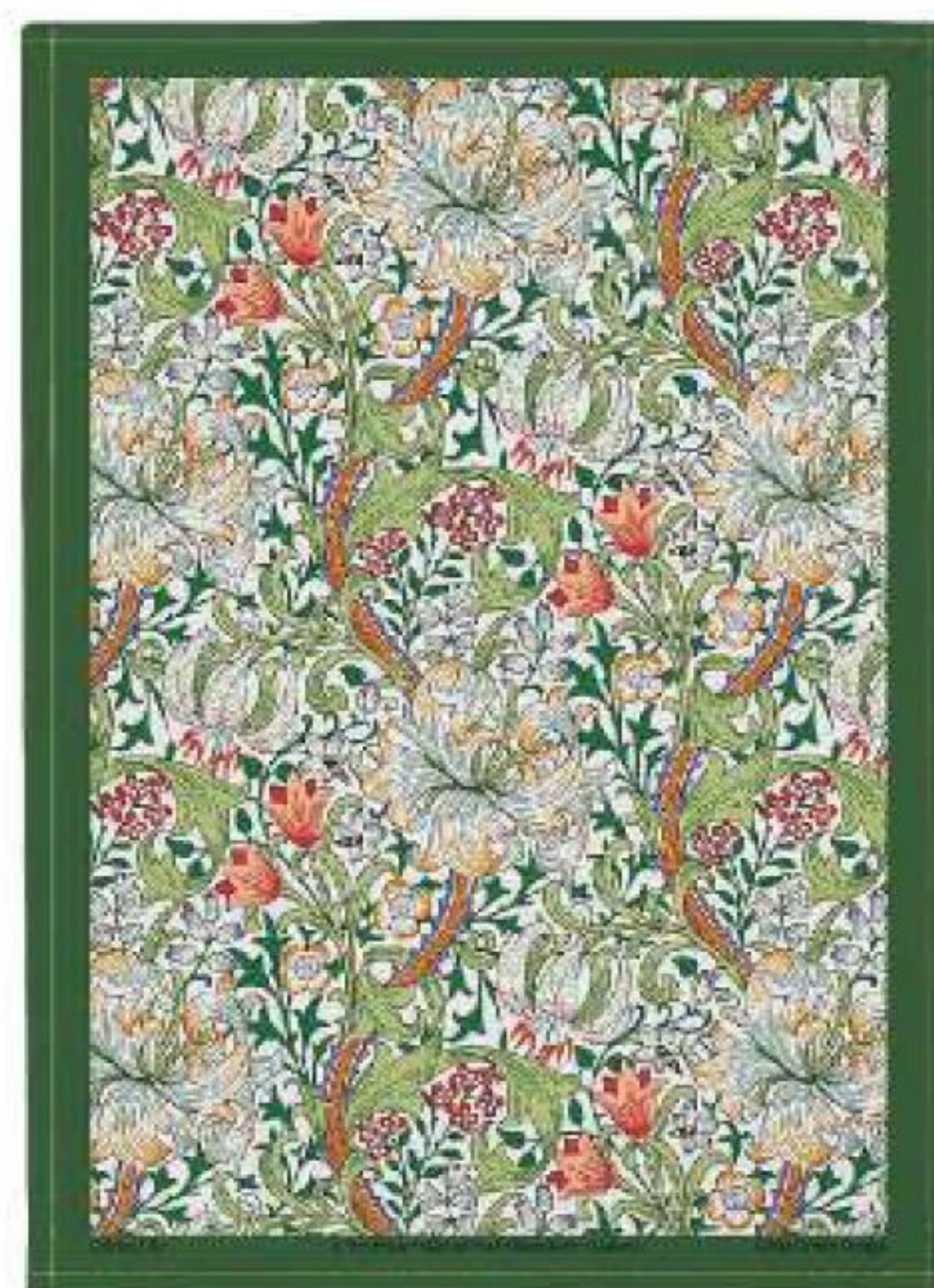


Abstract flowers scented boxed candle, Gisela Graham, **£12.99**

Floor lamp, **£129**; velvet ruffle bolster, **£29.50**, velvet ruffle cushion, **£25**; bolster, **£29.50**; candle holder, **£9.50**; candle, **£3**; short vase, **£35**; tall vase, **£29.50**; all National Gallery collection at Marks & Spencer



Rich hues of purple, navy and plum are the perfect backdrop for these winter blooms



Golden lily tea towel, Dunelm, **£10**



Marianna North tea for one, teapot with cup, Royal Botanic Gardens, shop.kew.org, **£45**

Floral shelf unit, Joe Browns, **£34**



Teal illustrated floral wallpaper, bobbibeck.com **£69** per roll

better health

Keep your friends close

As research shows that having close positive relationships can boost longevity and help ward off chronic illness, here's how to develop yours...



These days, thanks to technology, we're able to contact and keep up with more people than ever.

But despite us being more 'connected', nearly 50% of adults in the UK report feeling lonely.

Experts estimate that the average person knows around 600 others, largely made up of acquaintances. Yet research suggests to truly have more

meaningful relationships, the average person may be better properly prioritising and truly nourishing just five.

Psychologist and wellness expert Dr Audrey Tang says, 'When it comes to fulfilling friendships, it really is about quality not quantity.'

'You may have 350 "friends" on social media, but how many of those would be there for you if you had a real problem?

'With people busier than ever juggling jobs, families and other commitments, many just don't have time to maintain endless friendships, but where we focus our energy matters.

'This is because the people we choose to invest our time and effort in can impact everything from our confidence, happiness, productivity, self-esteem and even our health. Research has shown that having close positive

friendships can contribute to longevity, with studies linking people who have close confidants at a reduced risk of depression and less likely to die from a range of chronic diseases, including heart problems.'

Tang explains, 'To be healthy, we really do need healthy friendships that truly meet our needs.'

Here she outlines how to choose the healthiest friendships for you and the steps you can take to keep them that way.

Understand your needs

Maybe you need someone who's a good listener or someone who has

a silly sense of humour who brings you out of your shell? It's about understanding what makes you

feel loved, seen and connected. Which friendships bring joy? Which encourage honesty and authenticity? And most importantly, who can you be your real self with?

Those are the friendships that you need to actively choose.

'Nearly 50% of adults in the UK report feeling lonely'

Look for balance

When exploring the health of any friendship, reciprocity is key, because however 'great' that other person may be, if you're consistently putting all the effort in and someone else isn't, it's not

Spend quality time together





Royal besties Kate and Sophie

people you care about most. It can be harder sometimes to not respond immediately or turn down plans with people we don't know as well, but by actively making time for the people that you really care about, you've already blocked your calendar with the things and the people that matter.

Be present

With constant notifications on our phones, we're so used to splitting our attention these days we rarely give our full focus to anybody anymore. But to get the most out of friendships, and for our own sanity, it's vital that we do.

If you're out with a friend, put your phone away. Yes, it's nice to have one photo at dinner, but if you're taking photos of your whole meal for a social media post, then you're not spending the quality time with that person.

Instead, practice actively listening to the other person. It will make them feel much more heard, understood and, in turn, connected to you.

Make the effort

When it comes to close friends, how often are we all guilty of just thinking, "They know how much they mean to me"?

It sounds obvious, but to keep friendships healthy we do have to make a bit of effort. It doesn't always need to be huge – it might just be the odd text or voice note checking in when we're low on time – but every so often a small

gesture showing we really care, like a handwritten card, is really nice. When we see a loved one's handwriting, we instantly feel that sense of familiarity and connection. It can be like sending a little bit of your love on paper.

Be honest

When you're busy and feeling overwhelmed, be honest with your friends. That way they'll know you've got a lot on and won't just feel rejected.

If you need support or have big news to share, make sure you tell your friends before posting it over social media too. That way they'll feel valued as a trusted confidant

instead of thinking, 'Well, you clearly don't want me to help you because otherwise you wouldn't have posted this shout for help, out into the void.'

Get creative

When we're super-busy and drowning in work and family commitments, often the first ball we drop is seeing our friends. But usually this is the one we need most in difficult times.

If you're struggling to carve out time, try to be creative. Could you invite that friend on a workout you had scheduled anyway, do your weekly food shop together or call each other on your way into the office? Carving out small pockets of time is better than having no time at all.

● Visit draudreyt.com



Dr Tang says, 'It's never too late to make new close friends. Aristotle said that we have friends for a reason, a season and a lifetime, and there's a reason it's often later in life when we might be drawn more to those people we want to spend time with.'

'If you're still trying to find your "people", join a club or volunteer somewhere that interests you. It's a great way of supporting a cause that you like, but also of meeting other like-minded people who share your passions. For people who struggle more with small talk, things like a book club can be great, because when you start talking about the book you can have

conversations which express your values and views without having to talk about yourself directly.'

'Find things that are going on in your community, follow passions and be prepared to make a bit of effort outside your comfort zone. It might be inviting that new friend over for a coffee, helping them out with a favour or even sharing something about yourself that escapes the mundane small talk.'

'Building roots takes time and we need to remember that sometimes we need to be a little vulnerable first to do that. The more we show someone our true self, the more we give them permission to do the same.'

going to lead to a fulfilling friendship.

Not only do we need to consider who are the people that we respect for their values and behaviours, we also need to think, who are the people who truly respect me and treat me well for mine?

Prioritise those you care about

Like money, our time and energy aren't infinite, so it's important that we try to spend it wisely.

Regularly book in time with those friends who bring out the best in you and don't dilute it by trying to see too many people at once, which can change the dynamic and not always offer close friendships the nourishment they need. When you're struggling for time, prioritise replying to the texts, phoning and seeing the

Indulge in comfort

Cosy up after a crisp
winter walk with these
posh traditional puddings



Pumpkin, fig & maple syrup steamed pudding

Serves 6 Takes 2hr 45min-3hr 15min

- 75g butter, softened, plus extra for greasing
- 125g dried figs, chopped
- 75g dried dates, stoned and chopped
- 50g sultanas
- 250ml hot black tea, freshly made
- 1tsp baking powder
- 1/2tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 75g soft brown sugar

- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 200g self-raising flour
- 1tsp ground mixed spice
- 200g peeled pumpkin, finely grated (about 550g before peeling)
- 75g maple syrup or golden syrup, plus extra to serve

- 1** Grease a 1.5ltr pudding basin or bowl. Cut a circle of baking paper about 5cm larger than the basin and cut 2 sheets of foil the same size. Make a pleat along the middle of the paper, and the double layer of foil.
- 2** Place the dried fruits in a bowl and add the tea, baking powder, and bicarbonate of soda. Stir well and set aside for 15min.

- 3** Beat the butter and sugar together until pale and creamy, then gradually beat in the eggs until smooth. Fold in the flour and mixed spice until combined, then stir in the pumpkin, and the dried fruit mixture and soaking liquid until evenly blended.

- 4** Spoon the maple syrup into the base of the prepared basin and carefully spoon in the sponge mixture, covering the syrup layer. Top with the pleated baking paper, then the foil and tie tightly in place with kitchen string long enough to go twice around the basin and leave enough to make a handle.

- 5** Place a small trivet (or upside down side plate or saucer in the base of a large heavy-based saucepan or cast

- iron casserole and place the pudding basin on top. Carefully pour in enough boiling water to come two-thirds of the way up the side of the basin. Place over a high heat and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to very low, cover the pan, and steam for 2hr 30min-3hr. Check after 2hr 30min – it is cooked when a skewer pressed into the pudding right down to the base comes out clean and is very hot to the touch.
- 6** Remove the basin from the pan and set aside for 10min. Remove the string, foil, and paper and invert the pudding onto a serving plate. Drizzle over some extra syrup. Serve in wedges with homemade vanilla custard, cream or ice cream, if liked.

Baked orchard fruit cobbler with cinnamon crème fraîche

Serves 6 Takes 50min

- 8 large plums, halved, stoned and thickly sliced
- 3 pears, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 250g fresh blackberries, washed and dried
- 1tbsp crème de cassis (optional)
- 4tbsp soft brown sugar

COBBLER TOPPING

- 180g plain flour
- 11/2tsp baking powder
- A pinch of salt
- 75g unsalted butter, diced
- 50g caster sugar
- 125-150ml buttermilk

CINNAMON CRÈME FRAÎCHE

- 150g crème fraîche
- 2tsp icing sugar, sifted
- A little ground cinnamon

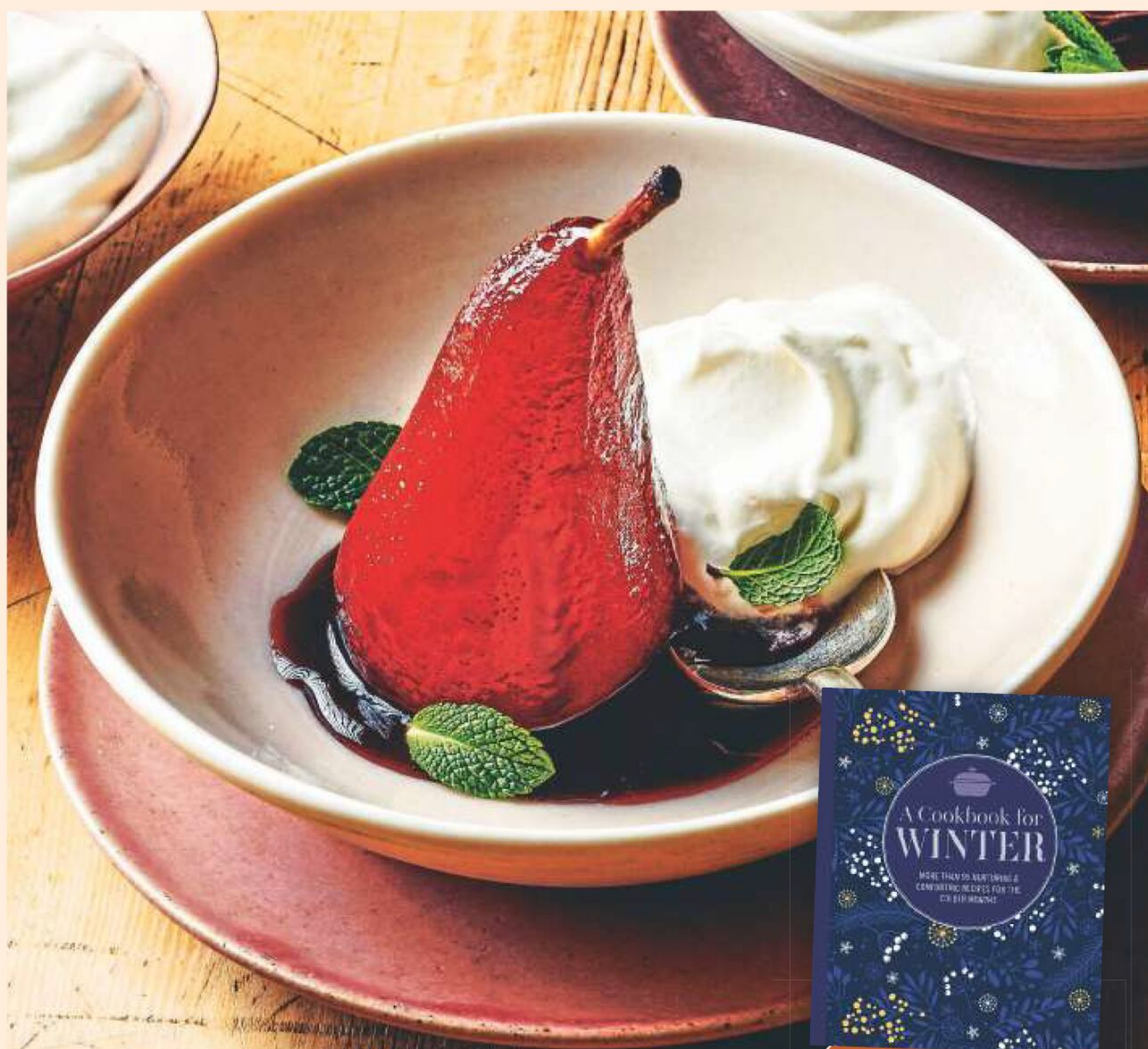
1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/fan 170°C. Place the fruit in a bowl, add the

cassis, if using, and brown sugar, and stir well to combine. Transfer the fruit to a large ovenproof dish.

2 For the topping, sift the flour, baking powder and salt into a bowl and rub in the butter to make fine crumbs. Stir in the sugar. Work in enough buttermilk to bring the mixture together to make a slightly sticky dough. Spoon mounds of the topping over the fruit layer, allowing some fruit to remain uncovered.

3 Bake uncovered for about 30-35min until the topping is risen and golden and the fruit is oozing rich juices. Check halfway through and cover the dish with the lid or foil if the top is beginning to over-brown.

4 Meanwhile, for cinnamon crème fraîche, stir the crème fraîche, sugar and cinnamon together until combined. Serve with the fruit cobbler.



These recipes are taken from **A Cookbook For Winter** (Ryland Peters & Small, £22)

Poached pears with orange blossom Chantilly cream

Serves 4 Takes 1hr, plus cooling

- 4 conference pears, peeled leaving the stalk intact
- 750ml bottle red wine or red grape juice
- 200g caster sugar
- 5cm cinnamon stick
- 12 black peppercorns
- 1 orange
- A few mint leaves, to garnish

ORANGE BLOSSOM CHANTILLY CREAM

- 300 ml double cream
- 2tbsp icing sugar
- A few drops of vanilla extract
- 1/2tsp orange blossom extract

1 Trim the base of the pears with a knife so they stand upright.

2 Pour the wine or grape juice into a tight-fitting saucepan and add the sugar, cinnamon, peppercorns and a 7.5cm piece of orange rind, plus a little squeeze of the orange

juice (about 1tbsp). Warm the liquid over a medium heat, stirring, until the sugar is dissolved, then carefully place the pears into the pan – it's OK if they fall over.

3 Bring to a simmer and poach for 45min, or until the pears are soft with only a little resistance when a knife is inserted. Remove the pears from the pan and leave to cool.

4 Meanwhile, return the pan to the heat and simmer until the sauce is glossy and reduced by half.

5 Whisk the cream with the icing sugar, vanilla extract and orange blossom extract until soft, billowy peaks.

Do not over whisk. Taste, adding more orange blossom extract if needed.

6 Stand a pear proud in a serving bowl. Pour the sauce over the pear and serve with a dollop of chantilly cream and a few fresh mint leaves, if liked.

A right royal brunch

It's said that King Charles loves an egg with every meal – so why not join him for a delicious brekkie, along with a cheeky cocktail!

Cheesy baked eggs with pickled walnuts

Serves 2 Takes 20min

- Butter, for greasing
- 400g spinach, wilted
- Handful cherry tomatoes, quartered
- 140g brie
- Basil leaves, torn
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 eggs
- 320ml double cream
- ¼ 390g jar Opies pickled walnuts, drained and sliced

1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C. Grease a small ovenproof dish.

2 Line the dish with the wilted spinach and make a well in the bottom. Place the cherry tomatoes on top.

3 Dot the brie around between the tomatoes, then add the torn basil leaves. Season with salt and pepper.

4 Crack the eggs into the centre of the spinach, then pour the cream over the eggs (try not to break the yolk). Top with the pickled walnut slices. Sprinkle over the grated cheese and bake for 10min.

Leave to stand for a few min, then enjoy with some toasted sourdough, if liked.



Brunch

Brunch martini

Serves 1 Takes 5min

- 1tsp Opies mango and passion fruit compote
- 50ml gin
- 25ml triple sec
- 15ml freshly squeezed lemon juice
- Ice cubes

1 Place the compote and gin into a cocktail shaker and 'muddle' using a muddler or the end of a small rolling pin.

2 Add the triple sec and lemon juice then fill with ice. Shake well then strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Decorate with an orange slice, if liked.



Green shakshuka

Serves 2-4 Takes 40min

- 1tbsp olive oil
- 1 leek, finely sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1tsp ground cumin
- 1tsp ground coriander
- ½tsp ground turmeric
- ¼tsp chilli flakes (optional)
- 200g fresh spinach, chopped
- 227g jar mini Opies Silverskin onions, halved if liked, plus 2tbsp vinegar from the jar
- 4 eggs
- 50g blue cheese
- Salt and pepper
- Fresh herbs, chopped, for garnish

1 Heat the oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Add the leek and cook for 5min, stirring, until softened. Add the garlic and cook for 1min until fragrant. Stir in the cumin, coriander, turmeric and chilli flakes, if using. Cook for 1min to toast the spices.

2 Add the spinach and cook for 3-4min, stirring occasionally, until wilted. Add the silverskin onions along with the vinegar from the jar. Stir to combine with the vegetables and spices. Use a spoon to create wells in the mixture. Crack one egg into each well. Crumble over the blue cheese.

3 Cover the pan with a lid and let the eggs cook until the whites are set but the yolks are still runny, about 5-7min. Cook longer if you prefer firmer yolks.

4 Remove from the heat. Season with salt and pepper and garnish with the fresh herbs. Serve immediately with crusty bread.

escapes

Dreamy retreats

From city stays to luxurious spas, these idyllic destinations are fit for royalty...

Low Wood Bay Resort & Spa, Lake District

The Lake District is a favourite holiday location of the Prince and Princess of Wales and their young family. For a romantic break with both relaxation and adventure, stay at the Low Wood Bay Resort & Spa. With lots of luxurious rooms overlooking Lake Windermere, guests can enjoy watching the

sunset from their balcony. The hotel has its own marina offering a range of watersports, including paddleboarding, wakesurfing and waterskiing for the more adventurous.

For a more relaxed day on the water, you can hire a boat or even charter your own yacht to fully embrace your regal side.

Unwind back at the hotel's spa, which has five indoor thermal experiences and an impressive heated outdoor infinity pool with panoramic views of the lake.

● A one-night stay in May starts from £135.78pp. Book at englishlakes.co.uk/hotels/low-wood-bay

Bridgerton
vibes



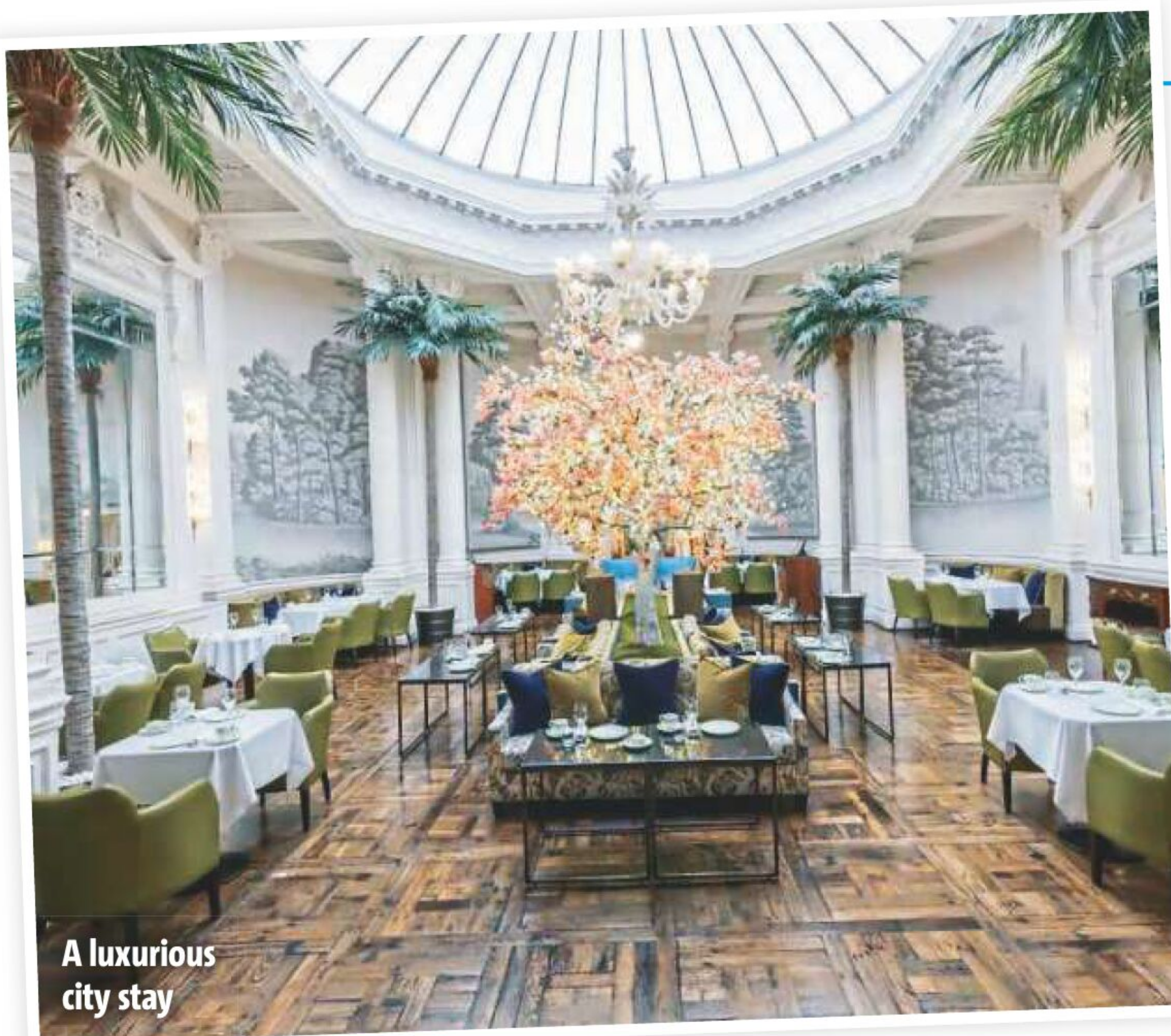
The Royal Crescent Hotel & Spa, Bath

Located on Bath's most sought-after Georgian crescent, a stay at The Royal Crescent Hotel & Spa will make you feel like you've stepped onto the set of *Bridgerton*. With impressive Georgian architecture, the hotel has 45 rooms and suites as well as a spa and restaurant.

Take time to explore the hotel's gardens, where you'll find pockets of natural beauty everywhere you go. If you're looking for the ultimate romantic gesture, the hotel organises private hot-air balloon rides over Bath, so you can experience the city from a breathtaking new perspective.

● A one-night stay in a classic room starts at £217.50pp. Book at royalcrescent.co.uk

Panoramic views
of the lake



A luxurious
city stay

The Balmoral, Edinburgh

Named after the royal family's Highland home Balmoral Castle and Estate, The Balmoral Hotel is located right in the heart of Edinburgh. With a range of classic rooms and suites, each room oozes Scottish charm, decorated with tartan soft furnishings and cosy interiors.

For world-class dining head to the hotel's restaurant, Number One, for a fusion of traditional and modern Scottish fare. Despite the hotel being located right in the city, you can escape the hustle and bustle at the spa with its 15-metre indoor pool, Turkish steam room and Finnish sauna.

● A one-night stay in a classic room starts at £282.50pp. Book at roccofortehotels.com

Sir Christopher Wren, Windsor

With views over the River Thames, Sir Christopher Wren is just a stone's throw away from Windsor Castle where the royals spend a lot of their time. The traditional Tudor-style bedrooms are perfect for a romantic weekend away and each room has its own individual character and features.

There are lots of dining options on site, including The Brasserie, which serves classic British dishes and afternoon tea, and The Terrace, where you can enjoy a cocktail with unbeatable views of the stunning Eton bridge.

Windsor itself has plenty to offer, including boat rides on the river, castle tours, beautiful parks and lots of museums to explore.

● A one-night stay in a classic double starts from £124pp. Book at sirchristopherwren.co.uk



Traditional
Tudor-style rooms



Enjoy the
peaceful
grounds

Congham Hall, Norfolk

The Prince and Princess of Wales love to escape to the Norfolk countryside during the summer months and Congham Hall Hotel is just a short car journey from their holiday home, Anmer Hall. Stay in one of the hotel's 31 uniquely designed bedrooms that are all named after flowers and herbs from the grounds and gardens.

Take a stroll through the hotel's ancient apple orchard and then head to the Congham Hall restaurant for a fresh slice of apple crumble made using the orchard's delicious produce. Unwind in the spa with its thermal suite, indoor pool and wide menu of wellness and beauty treatments.

● A one-night stay in May starts at £99pp. Book at conghamhallhotel.co.uk

By Lucy Brown



EDWARD AND SOPHIE

The Queen's youngest son announced his engagement to then Sophie Rhys-Jones in 1999, and when doing photos for the press, Edward gave her a quick peck on the cheek.



CHARLES AND CAMILLA

It's very rare for Charles and Camilla to engage in public displays of affection, but before they were King and Queen, and shortly after they wed in 2005, the pair did share a smooch after a polo match!



EUGENIE AND JACK

Looking incognito in her sunglasses at a Surrey wedding in 2018, Princess Eugenie and her partner Jack Brooksbank were every inch the young couple in love as he snuggled into her.

KISS ME QUICK

The royals sometimes break protocol with a cheeky public smooch



WILLIAM AND KATE

To a roaring crowd outside Buckingham Palace, Prince William and his new bride Kate kissed shortly after their extravagant marriage in 2011.



ZARA AND MIKE

At the Cheltenham Festival in 2024, the down-to-earth royals indulged in a proper pash. Good for them!



HARRY AND MEGHAN

Much like his brother before him, Prince Harry gave his blushing bride Meghan a very public kiss when they left their wedding ceremony in Windsor in 2018.

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The Story People

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